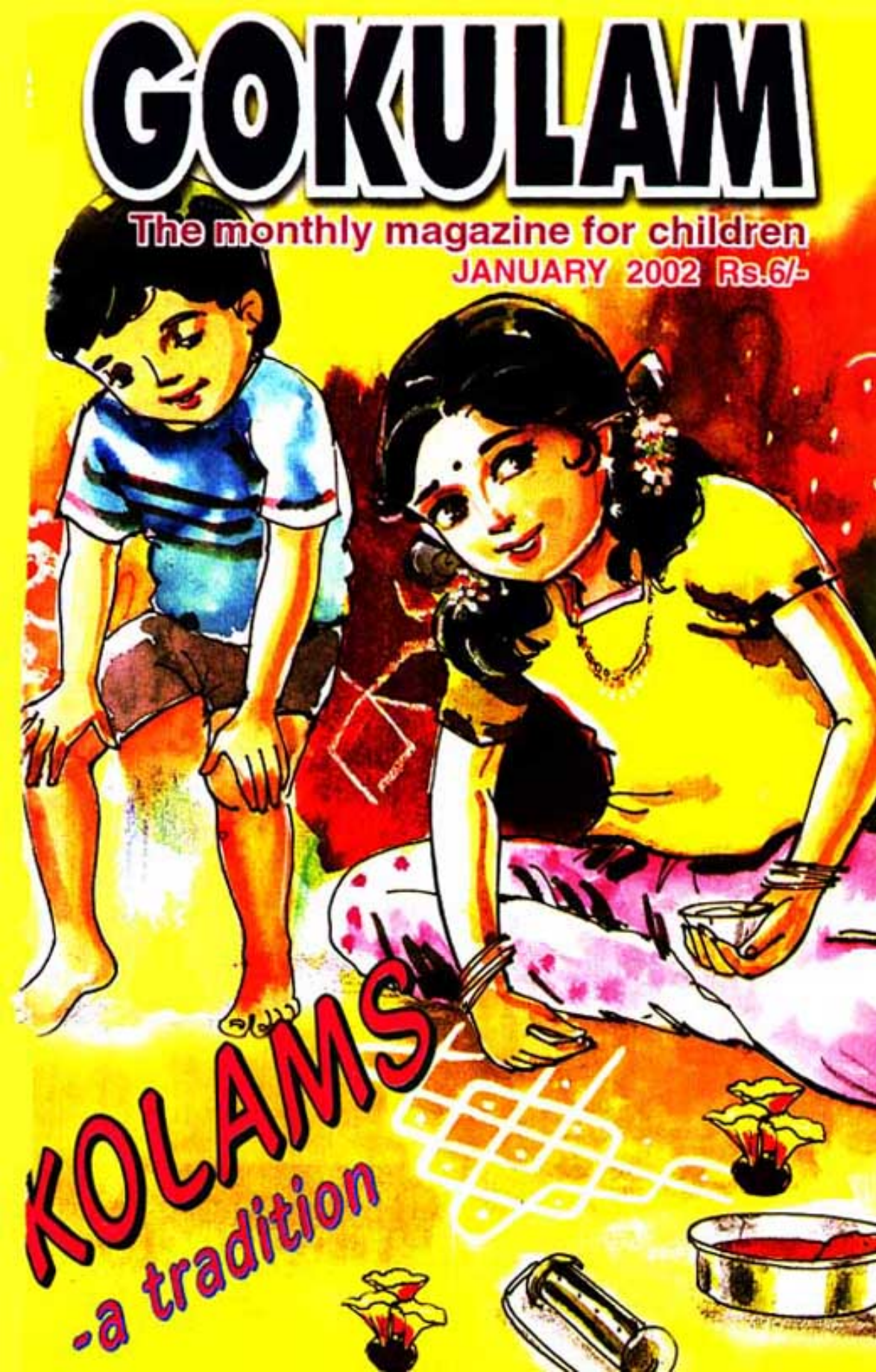
GOKULAM

The monthly magazine for children
JANUARY 2002 Rs.6/-



KOLAMS
-a tradition

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GOKULAM

JANUARY 2002
Vol. XIV, No.7

Of all created things the loveliest,
And most divine are children.
—William Canton

E-mail :
kalkiweekly@vsnl.com

MILITANTS ATTACK PARLIAMENT

The nation is shocked and angered by the diabolical attack on our parliament by militants. It is an attack not only on our leaders who were in the parliament, but also on the nation as a whole, since parliament represents our democracy and the will of the people.

This terrorist attack also argues the case in favour of the POTO most effectively. The Prevention Of Terrorism Ordinance or POTO for short, was vehemently condemned by the opposition and they were determined not to allow its passage in parliament to become law. The horror of the December 13th incident would perhaps make them reconsider their decision. We are living in extraordinary times and certain extraordinary measures are required to tackle the situation.

Ofcourse POTO must not be misused and the opposition can suggest safe guards, so that innocent people are not harassed. The safe guards can be built into the act.

NEWS ANALYSIS

The war in Afghanistan is almost over. A caretaker government has been formed with many Afghan groups taking part. This is a result of a conference held in Bonn under the auspices of the United Nations.

But the militants have not been entirely wiped out. Promising to surrender, they took advantage of a lull in bombing by the U.S. and escaped. It is believed that most of them fled to Pakistan. It is likely that the Pakistan government will turn a blind eye to their presence. The terrorists will then regroup and commence their dastardly attacks once again. Their immediate target would be Kashmir. We have to be more vigilant than ever before. Osama Bin Laden is still at large.

Students in Chennai are agitated over police excesses on hostalites of the Law College. It is true that a few Law college students had not paid their bill in a hotel and when questioned, had picked up a quarrel and misbehaved with the staff of the hotel. But this should not have been a reason for excessive reaction by the police.

Many students with fractured limbs and head injuries have been hospitalised. All the students of the city colleges have joined hands in an agitation demanding action against errant policemen.

Let us hope that justice will be done and that the situation will soon return to normal.

A STRANGE CREATURE!

Once upon a time, there lived a poor fisherman with his wife and three children, in a small village. The village was near the bank of a river. The poor man's name was Ram and he earned money only by fishing.

One night, when everyone was asleep, a strange sound came from the river. It sounded like nothing on earth! It woke up all the villagers. They all came running to the river holding lanterns.

Suddenly, a strange creature appeared before them. The creature had one eye, a big mouth and five string like legs that hung from its body. It looked scary and somewhat like a large spider and moved on its belly. Everyone trembled with fear. But Ram was brave.

- P. Karthik Perumal, Std.III,
P.S.B.B.S.S.School, Chennai.

Competition : WIN A WRIST WATCH!

Dear children,

We have deliberately blanked out the rest of the story. For, we want to give you another opportunity to enhance your creative writing skills!

Did this creature come out of the deep oceans or from the centre of the hot earth? Was it good or bad? What happened to Ram, his family and the villagers?

Complete the story and mail it to us to reach us on or before **12.01.2002.** Do not forget to mention **"Short story competition"** on the envelope. Please make it brief **(300 words only)** and as exciting as possible.

Think, frame the outline of the story in your mind, sequence it clearly and then write.

The best entry shall be published and the winner will receive a **wrist watch as a prize.**

We look forward to your enthusiastic response.

New Year Greetings to all of you.

- Editor

Humour contest
I prize

ALL IN

Morning bell rings... The teacher walks down the corridor. Students run helter, skelter, jumping over benches, stamping each other's foot and finally take their places.

Scene 1

Monitor : Sh! Shsh... Keep quiet all of you. *(Bangs on the table)* Get back to your places... Sh... Sir's coming...

(The children settle down quickly)

Teacher : Good morning, children!

Students *(in chorus)* : good morning sir...

Teacher : All students who are present, sit down. Absentees stand up!

Student 1 : But sir... how...

Teacher : Alright. I know... Someone just name the absentees, and be quick...

(attendance is finally taken)

Scene 2

(Students begin to talk in loud whispers. The noise level slowly increases...)

Teacher : Stop that! Why are you making such a noise. The principal is circling the corridors...

(students begin to giggle)

Student 2 *(to another student)* **:** Maybe our principal is learning how to draw perfect circles...

Student 3 : ...and he is

GOOD SPIRIT

practicing that on our corridors...

Student 4 : No, no! What sir meant was...

Teacher *(on seeing the three children talk to each other)* **:** Both of you three... stop talking will you?

(the entire class bursts into laughter)

Scene 3

Teacher : Let me begin my class. Today, we shall study about 'matter'...

(he turns to write on the black board and the children start talking again)

Teacher *(losing his patience)* **:** You... you there ... you girl with a pony tail... stand up... what's your name?... never mind forget it... I too have two daughters and both of the two are girls... But they...

(children can't help giggling. They try hard to control themselves)

Teacher : What an unruly class! Why are

you all laughing?

(The principal passes by their class. Silence prevails for exactly those four seconds!)

Teacher : Did you see that? The principal just passed away ... and you are all...

Students *(in chorus)* **:** But sir, we just saw him. *(laughter prevails)*

Scene 4

Teacher *(in a hope to continue with the class)* **:** So now, matter exists in three forms...

Student 5 to student 6 *(as she puts out her fingers and counts)* **:** Solids, liquids and...

Teacher *(looking angrily at them)* **:** You two there, meet me at the back of the class...

(Student 5 and student 6 promptly stand up and start walking towards the wall at the end of the class)

Teacher : Not there you fools. Meet me when the class is over.

(the children become relatively quieter as they begin to feel hungry.)

Scene 5 *(After lunch)*

(Physics practicals class. Children get ready to go to the lab.)

Teacher : Stand in a straight line and go to the lab.

Students *(in chorus)* **:** Yesss... Sir!

Teacher : Remember. When you arrive at the lab, stand in a straight circle around the table and do all the exercises.

Student 7 : Exercises or experiments, sir?

Teacher : Now cut that. Get ready to walk. All the girls must stand to the left and all the boys to the right. The rest of you can stand in the middle...

(Children burst into uncontrollable laughter)

Scene 6 *(in the lab)*

Teacher : Get ready all of you. Do you have your recording books...?

Students *(in a chorus)* **:** Yesss... Sir!

Teacher : But the air is feeling very hot. Open the windows and let the atmosphere come in...

(the children are too tired of having laughed the whole day, that they prefer to work for a while... Silence prevails. Serious work in progress...)

THE END

- V. Krishnan, Std. XI, Vyasa Vidya Peetham, Palghat.

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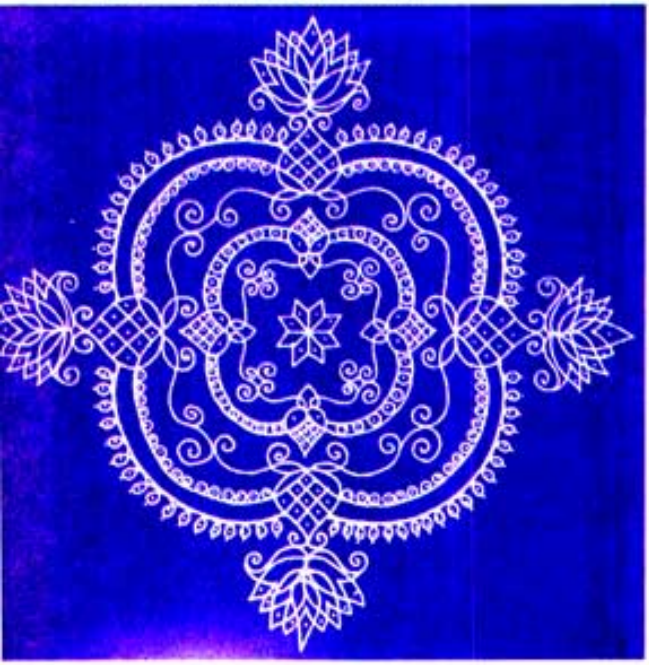
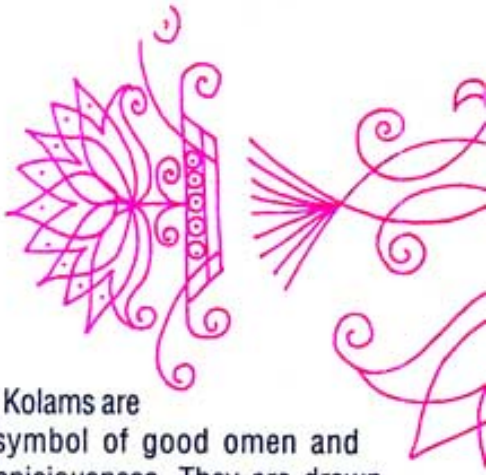
COVER STORY

Kolam means 'beauty' or 'beautiful'. Drawing kolams is an art - an ancient art. It is a tradition that has passed through several generations - the grandmother or the mother teaching the young grand daughter or daughter. The practice of drawing kolams finds a place in very ancient literature.





Kolams are a symbol of good omen and auspiciousness. They are drawn during festive seasons, at the time of weddings and other functions, in temples and in everyone's home.

Kolams are a means of decoration. In villages, kolams are drawn on the hard mud walls of houses, on pillars and front verandahs to make the house look beautiful.

Kolams are a form of transient art. It gives an opportunity for women to exhibit their artistic talents day after day, although there is no rule that states it is exclusive for women. It is a silent art as the task is performed in silence and total concentration

The lady of the house wakes up early in the morning to perform this task. At sunrise, or even earlier, she walks out of the house carrying a broom, a pail of water in which some fresh cowdung is mixed and a bowl of rice flour. She is out there to establish a contact with nature and the universe. She sweeps the frontyard of the house and sprinkles the water to make the

PATTERNS ON THE FLOOR

floor damp. The cowdung further hardens the floor and gives it the dark grey colour on which the white pattern would stand out. It also acts as a disinfectant and keeps the mosquitoes and flies away.

Once the floor is ready, the actual task begins. The creator first fixes the area in her mind. Then it is important to locate the centre from where the pattern begins. The pattern, as conceived in her mind, opens out from this centre and spreads over the mentally marked area. The additions are endless in imagination but limited by space.

Drawing kolams is not an easy skill. It requires patience and practice to master it. A pinch of rice flour is held between the thumb and the forefinger. The line appears, like magic, as the thumb gently rolls over the forefinger. The hand moves in the direction of the line.

When the kolam is complete, it is a picture of a perfectly calculated, proportionate and symmetrical geometric pattern - be it a circle, square or even a triangle.

Kolams can be drawn : (a) by joining, connecting or winding around dots. These dots are calculated and evenly spaced. (b) using just lines - straight or curved or a combination of both.

Whatever be the pattern or kind, the entire piece of art must be an unbroken line with no gaps. People believed that any gap would allow evil spirits to enter!

Why is rice flour used? It is true that the white colour stands out. But the other more important reason lies in the belief that the rice flour would serve as a feed for birds, squirrels, rats and several tiny insects.

On auspicious occasions, rice flour paste is used instead of the flour. The traditional practice is to dip a small, thin piece of cloth into this paste and draw the lines by gently squeezing the cloth and allowing the paste to dribble out through the tip of the fingers. This requires a certain knack and control.

The kolam looks beautiful even at this stage. But to further enhance its beauty, a red outline (a paste of red soil) is added. Bright yellow flowers of the pumpkin plant are placed.

The posture and position of the creator is another aspect. The woman stands with her feet spread across a comfortable distance, knees straight and back bent to form a perfect '7'. This is good exercise for the lungs, stomach, back and the limbs.

The word 'kolam' is commonly used in the South Indian states. But the tradition prevails all over the country. It is known by other names in other states.

The kolams of Bengal are rounded and linear and are occasionally painted with a brush. These are called ALPANAS. In Bihar, these patterns are known as ARIPANA, in Uttar Pradesh as CHOWKPURANA, in Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh as MADANA and in Orissa as OSA. The patterns are sometimes drawn using earth and vegetable dyes.

Karnataka is famous for its kolams of the sun, moon and planets. The traditional kolams of Kerala are more complex and ritualistic. Flower kolams called ATHAPOOKALAM that look like beautiful carpets, are very famous in Kerala, particularly at the time of the Onam festival.

'Rang' means colour. The RANGOLIS of Gujarat and Maharashtra tradition, are bright colourful kolams where coloured powder is used to fill in the pattern.

This art is also prevalent in other parts of the world. The people of Iceland identify a sacred spot and draw a pattern. However they leave a part of it open on the Eastern side from where they believe that the supernatural powers arise! The Indians of Mexico draw patterns using coloured powder and they collect the powder in an urn to store it!

Joseph Campbell a well known cultural commentator has called these kolams to be forms of visual magic. To us, to all of us, it means much more than that. It is an art; a custom; a tradition; a culture; a treasure; a skill and a joy.

Let us pass on this joyful tradition to the forthcoming generations.

- Lakshmi Natarajan

Cover Illustration : **Lalitha**

MORE AND MORE INTERESTING

✉ Gokulam is like the ferry, To cross the ocean of worry.

Gokulam is like rain, To wipe and wash your pain.

Gokulam is like the dew, Treasure of the lucky few.

Gokulam is like the sky, It keeps your spirits high.

Gokulam is like the greenery, Ever fresh in our memory.

- S. Jagadish, Std. XI, Chennai.

✉ I feel proud to be part of the large family of Gokulam readers. I love the posters; but I feel sad to cut them because there are other interesting features on the back side. Can you not leave the other side blank?

- Suyash Mandal, Vishakapatnam.

✉ My greetings to the staff and readers of Gokulam for a happy and prosperous New Year.

- R. Preethi, Std. VII, Chennai.

✉ The best thing about Gokulam is that it provides a balanced assortment of reading material and at the same time encourages children to write.

- Suhas Shetty, Std. XI, Udupi, Karnataka.

✉ Gokulam is my best friend. Some of the articles in it help me to avoid anger and to calm me down.

- R. Srikanth, Kakinada, A.P.

✉ Gokulam is an ideal magazine for children. It gives us knowledge and information and helps me to do my school projects and assignments.

- Tanveer Ali, Std. VI, Ponda, Goa

✉ The solutions offered by Grandma worm are full of care and affection. I am longing to see this lady who is so kind.

- Neelima Chakraborty, Std. X, Darjeeling.

✉ Gokulam is becoming more and more interesting day by day.

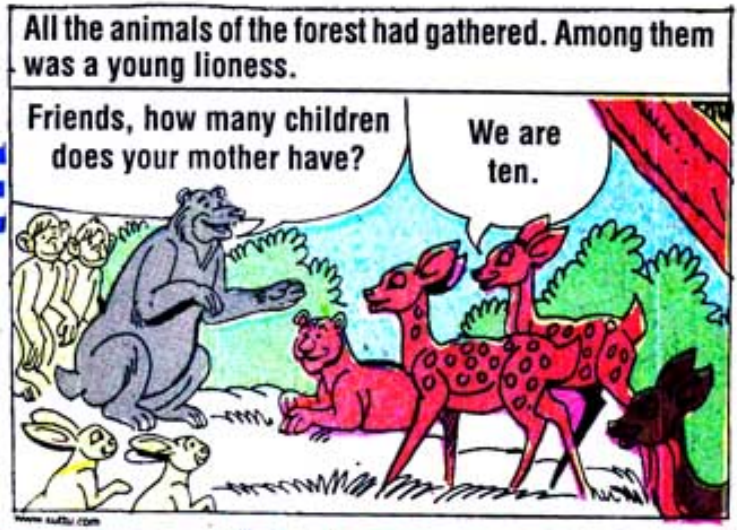
- Saswat Mohapatra, Bhubaneshwar.

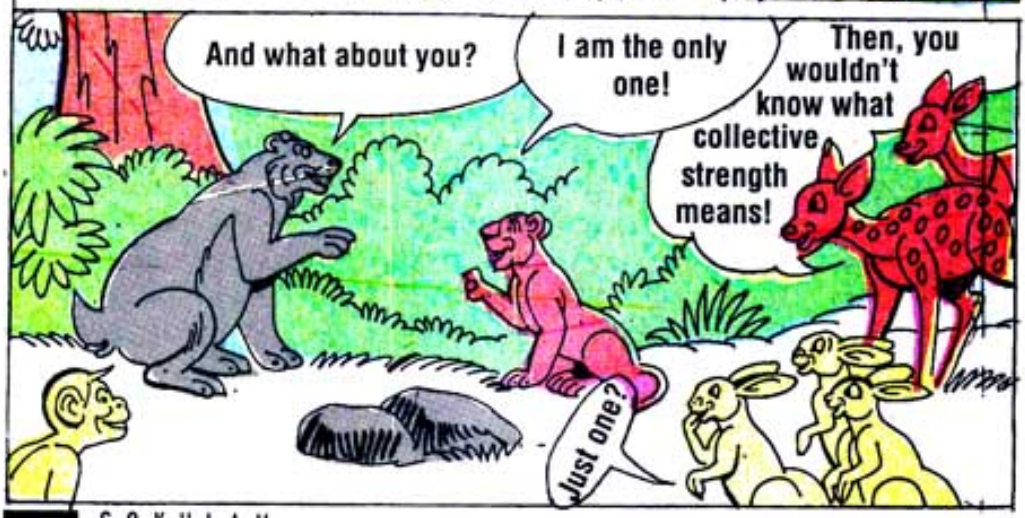
✉ My parents used to insist that I should develop a reading habit. But I used to ignore this and spend my time browsing on the net. But recently I was introduced to Gokulam and I find myself enjoying reading. Now, I not only read Gokulam but also other good books. Thanks to Gokulam.

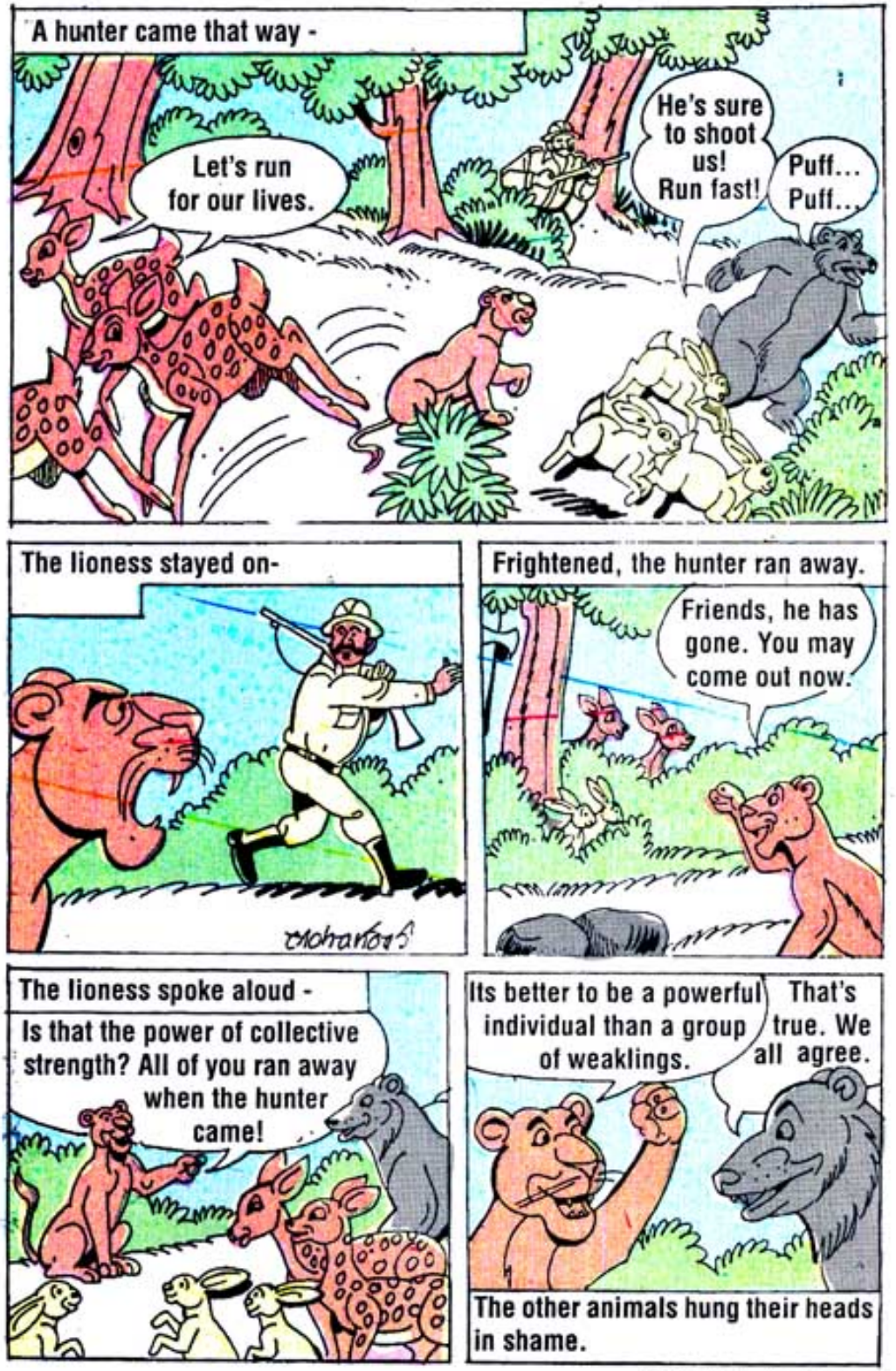
- N. Satish Kumar, Coimbatore.

THE CONFERENCE

by
VENUVARIATH
M. MOHANDAS






A hunter came that way -
Let's run for our lives.
He's sure to shoot us! Run fast!
Puff... Puff...
The lioness stayed on-
Frightened, the hunter ran away.
Friends, he has gone. You may come out now.
The lioness spoke aloud -
Is that the power of collective strength? All of you ran away when the hunter came!
Its better to be a powerful individual than a group of weaklings.
That's true. We all agree.
The other animals hung their heads in shame.

OUR RESOLUTIONS

HELP THE POOR AND NEEDY

In our house, we often receive guests from the circle of friends and relatives. When these guests come, they usually give me some money as a token of their love and affection. This I usually save.

As per the suggestion of my parents, from the ensuing year of 2002, I have resolved to meet some poor children on my birthday and gift them note-books, pencils, pens etc. This I shall do by using the money I have saved.

- M. Sandhya, Std VI, Carmel School, Bangalore.

NO FIGHTING AT ANY COST

I was in fifth standard when my father first introduced me to the idea of resolutions. I made one resolution not to fight with my elder sister at any cost. Actually, I found that this helped me. I found a great change in myself. I became calm and soon realised that everyone was kind to me. I was also able to concentrate well on my studies.

I realised that when a person makes good resolutions year after year and keeps them up, he or she will surely succeed in life.

- R. Nisheavidha, Std VIII, S.S.V. Chennai.

PRIZE WINNING ENTRIES

HAVE MERCY PLEASE!

I made a resolution to tell children and my friends not to catch butterflies and dragonflies and kill them by way of having fun.

Earlier, I myself used to do that. On advice from my parents and after deep thought, I began to feel sorry for them. I stopped catching them.

I make a request to all my Gokulam friends not to catch and torture these lovely creatures. Let us resolve to help them live happily.

- Sai Deepak, Std IV, Saikor English Med. School, Vizianagaram.

HELPING THE BLIND

I was born in 1991. have been making 'esolutions for the ɔast few years. It was ny mother who :aught me the meaning of 'resolution'.

The most exciting of my resolutions was helping the blind. I cannot forget the day when I helped a blind woman cross the road and the manner in which she blessed me.

Every year I make a new resolution!

- R.P. Janani, Age 10,
SKMHSS, Chennai.

MANY BUT MANAGEABLE

My resolutions are many but manageable. I want to be :

* a good creation of god.
* an obedient daughter to my parents.
* a helpful sister to my brother.
* a well behaved student to my teachers
* a good listener of the elders.
* a superb writer for Gokulam and
* a regular reader of Gokulam too!

- Ladika S. Dave, Age : 15,
St. Aloysius
High School,
Nallasopara(W)

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* Zhu Chen

Sports Talk

India had two distinct advantages even before the test series against England commenced.

(1) They were in their home ground with suitably prepared pitches.

(2) The England team was a depleted one.

Hence, the outcome was clear and one sided results were expected.

Anil Kumble was expected to perform well and he did. This man of the match (first test) who emerged with bowling figures of 8 for 133 and 10 for 233 in the first and second tests respectively, seems to have come around after a not so successful tour of South Africa. It was only his line and length that came in handy and not so much the turn!

Three new faces in the Indian team. What better opportunity for these youngsters to prove themselves than this series! We welcome Tinu Yohannan (the second player from Kerala to represent India), Iqbal Siddiqui and Sanjay Bangar and wish them all the very best and a lot of LUCK!

Advantage INDIA

* we wish you luck!

MISSED A TURN

Vishy lost in the semi finals of the World Chess Championship held in Moscow. It is true that Anand had the advantage of playing white in his fourth game against Ivanchuck. But things did not go well for Anand. He seemed uncomfortable that day.

The finals between the two Ukrainians, 18 year old Rushlan Ponomariov (the youngest player to qualify for a world chess title) and Vassily Ivanchuck, will be an eight game final.

Zhu Chen claimed the World Women's Chess Championship and became the second Chinese player to do so. This 25 - year old is all ready to celebrate her victory over Kostenivk. It was not an easy final and Zhu had to put up a strong fight.

AUSTRALIA VS SOUTH AFRICA

The focus is here. Two top teams of the world clash in a battle to prove their supremacy. Who will emerge as the world Test Champion is the question.

PUNJAB ON TOP

We Indians are sports lovers. Ever so many people play one or other sport. It is heartening to note that even archery, canoeing and kayaking are gaining popularity.

This was clear from the 31st Indian National Games held in Ludhiana. Punjab stayed on top throughout with a final tally of 61 gold, 44 silver and 58 bronze.

CREATIVE CORNER

A VARIETY

You all know how to make greeting cards. Many of you would have certainly tried making them - in different sizes.

All you need is: Chart paper, pencil, colours, scissors and glue.

But here is a variety. Think about using these items to make your cards look prettier.

* Dals of different colours - toor, urad, moong and masoor - to fill in the picture drawn.

* Bits of wool in different colours or lengths of wool to run over the outline of your drawing.

* Bits of crushed paper in different colours (the paper must be thin).

* Chamki and small beads in different colours.

* Bits of smooth, coloured paper to make a collage.

* Pencil shavings (If you sharpen your pencils carefully, these can make pretty petals).

* Small shells collected at the beach, shells of pista nuts.

The list is endless. Share your ideas with your friends and work together. Have fun.

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

WHO WAS THIS MAN?

There was a man who
- Lost his job
- Started a business and failed
- Lost his wife to a fatal disease
- Had a nervous breakdown,
- Contested in an election for the speaker's post in the legislature and lost
- Tried for nomination in a political party and lost
- Applied for the post of 'land officer' and lost
- Contested for senate and lost.
- Contested for vice president and lost
- Once again contested for senate and lost
- Two years later this man got elected as the PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES.

- Harikrishnan, Coimbatore - 641 028

?

Who was he? Turn to page 64 to find out.

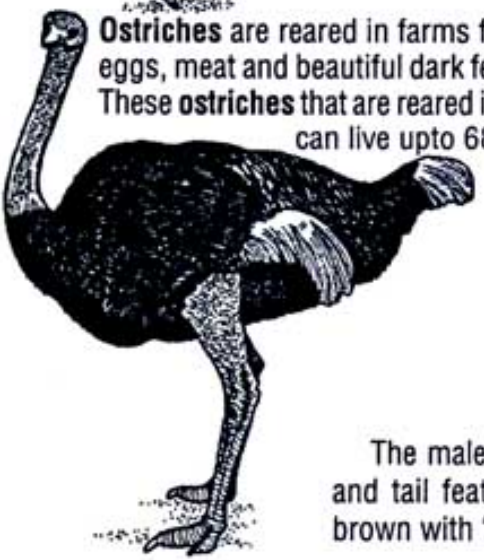
THE FLIGHTLESS BEAUTY

AAZHI

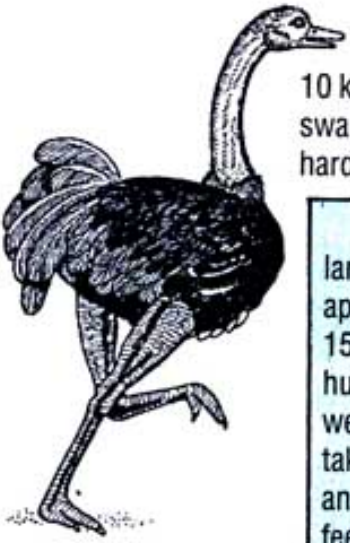
Ostriches are found in parts of Africa, especially South Africa. Infact, they are not found in any other part of the world other than the African continent. They are big and heavy, weighing more than a hundred kilos! These birds are nearly eight feet tall! The **ostrich** is the national bird of the province of Natal.

The **Ostrich** cannot fly, but can run very fast at a speed of 70 kms per hour. It can cover a distance of 4.50 meters in a single stride.

Ostriches are reared in farms for their eggs, meat and beautiful dark feathers. These **ostriches** that are reared in farms can live upto 68 years.



The male bird is black in colour with white wings and tail feathers. The females, slightly smaller, are brown with 'dirty' white wings and tail feathers.



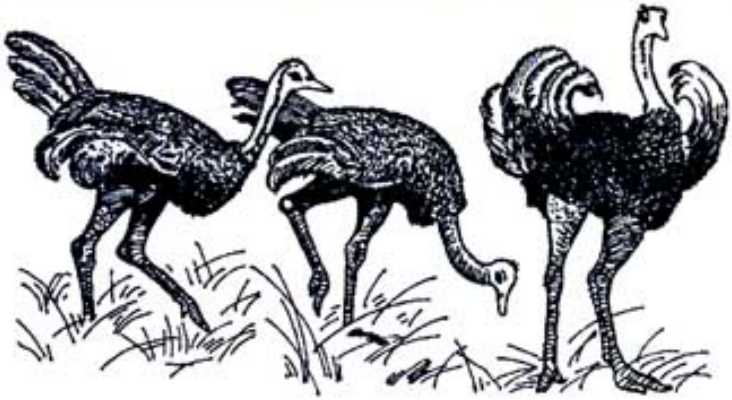
Ostriches eat seeds of plants, leaves, roots, insects, lizards and small tortoises. They need to eat about 10 kilos of food everyday! Along with this meal they also swallow stones, pieces of iron, nails and other similar hard substances that help to digest the heavy meal.

The **ostrich** egg is the largest egg. It is approximately 20 cms long, 15 cms wide (the size of a human being's head) and weighs about 1½ kgs. It takes 40 minutes to cook it and an egg when cooked can feed 8 persons.

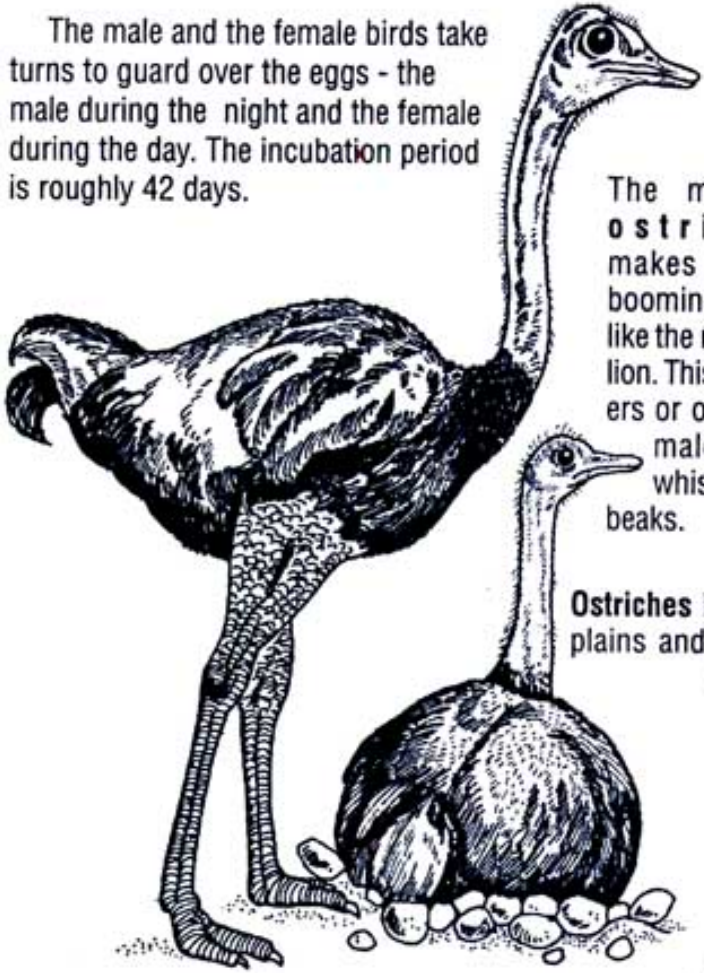
The shell of the egg is tough and hard - so tough that it does not break even when a man stands on it! The shell is used as a container to store water by the tribes of Africa.

The male **Ostrich** excites and attracts the female by performing a dance. It moves its feathers like a fan and shakes its head forward and backward to perform!

Every male lives in the company of three to four female birds. Although they live separately, the eggs are laid in a common nest. The nest is nothing but a large hole dug in the sand, around which several stones are arranged. An **ostrich** lays about 20 eggs during one mating season.



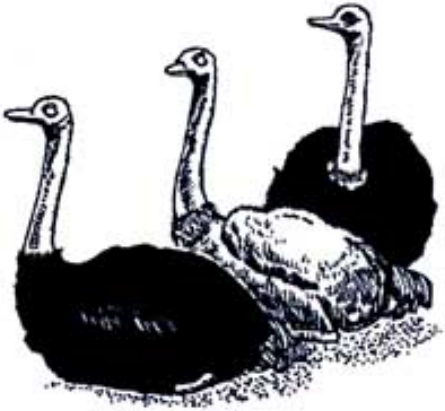
The male and the female birds take turns to guard over the eggs - the male during the night and the female during the day. The incubation period is roughly 42 days.



The male **ostrich** makes loud booming calls like the roar of a lion. This often confuses the hunters or other predators. Both the male and the female also whistle, snort and snap their beaks.

Ostriches live in open, semi - arid plains and woodlands, where the climate is generally dry. They can stay without drinking water for several days together.

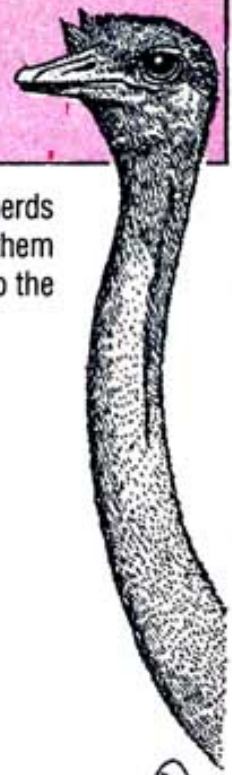
The **Ostrich** has very strong legs. When angry, it knocks the enemy down with a single hard kick - just like a horse!



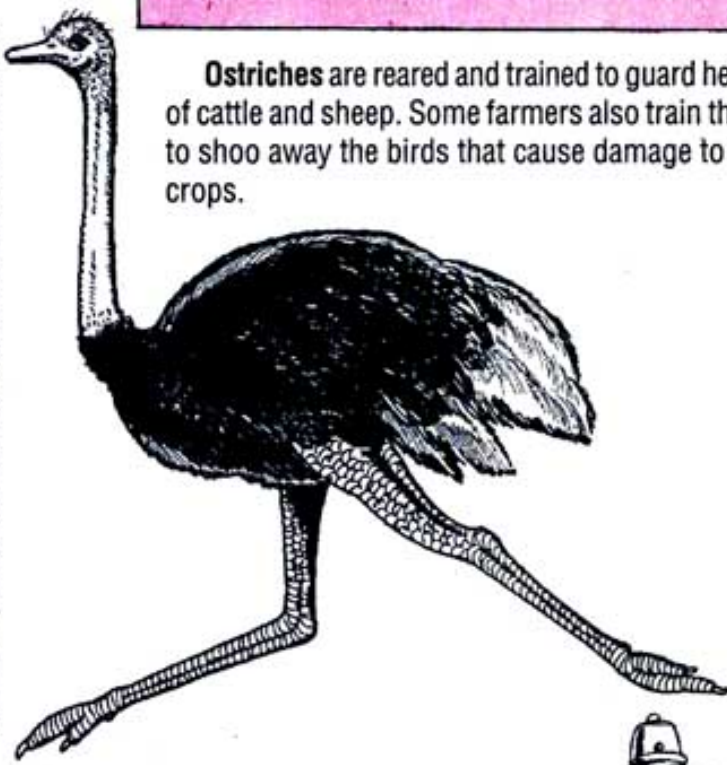
When they sleep, these birds sleep in a group. One of them keeps awake to perform the role of a sentry and warns the other birds in case of any danger.

The **ostrich** is the only bird which has just two toes. The inner toe is thick and strong and it is on this one toe that the **ostrich** runs. The toes are broad. This helps the bird to walk in the sandy plains.

The **ostrich** can spot its enemies even at a distance with the help of its long neck. The eyes are large - as large as a tennis ball!

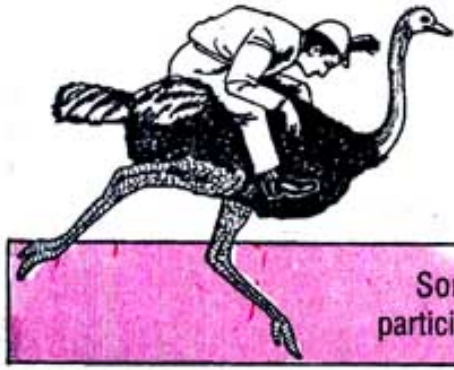


It is believed that long, long ago **Ostriches** were able to fly and that they lost this capacity due to lack of practice.



Ostriches are reared and trained to guard herds of cattle and sheep. Some farmers also train them to shoo away the birds that cause damage to the crops.

In parts of South Africa, **ostriches** are harnessed to carts to run a race.



Sometimes men ride on the bird itself to participate in the race - an **ostrich** race!

A GIGANTIC GRASS

When one mentions the word grass, we generally think of ankle-high lush green lawns, but there are grasses that are taller than a 13-storyed building! These tall customers are the bamboo. The sight of the tall, erect bamboo crowned by a pretty design of leaves, swaying proudly with the breeze, makes us forget that these majestic beings are in fact cousins of the lowly grass. Bamboo grows in all parts of the world that are not snow-bound or arid. In India, there are 74 species of this plant.

Bamboo is aptly called the poor man's timber for it provides cheap raw material for building houses, furniture, rafts and bullock carts. The tough stem is ideal for making arrow-shafts, lathis (weapon of self-defence for the common man in many parts of the Indian subcontinent), flutes and toys. Bamboo also supports a thriving handicrafts industry.

The Chinese make paper out of bamboo. One kind of bamboo has a lumpy substance called tabashir, which is used in medicine. When the bamboo plant is young and tender, it is eaten, not only by man but also by a host of creatures such as rats, hares, porcupines and pigs. It is the main food of the endangered giant panda.

Like most other plants, the gigantic bamboo begins life as a small seed that snuggles in the soil. The moment it rains, the seed begins to grow. It is seldom alone, as the seeds are usually strewn in clusters. The seedlings grow tall and fast, so fast that in some species one can actually watch them grow, for the gain in height each

day can be several centimeters. They grow upwards into the sky and sideways under the ground. This underground growth is not the root system but a stem called rhizome. The rhizome keeps sending out more shoots above the ground, so that every seed produces a clump of innumerable bamboo shoots over the years.

The bamboo stem, called the culm, grows straight and long like a pipe. It is divided into sections by rings called nodes. It is at the nodes that leaves grow in a circle. As years go by, new culms grow around the older ones, which become strong and woody. The outer covering of the stem is very hard and shiny and often mottled. If left to grow without any pruning, the

bamboo tract grows into a thick impenetrable jungle.

Bamboo doesn't grow forever, though. Each bamboo has a life span. When its life is over, the entire lot of culms in an area flower together and die after dropping their seeds. Some flower in three years, but most give 20-45 years of service before they die. Then the seeds that are left behind take over, forming new clusters of seedlings and new culms of bamboo. **(Velayudhan Features)**

I HOPE...

I hope your elders teach each one of you,
To value yourself, so that you will value those,
Even though their bones are frail and their memories are lost in fog
Over the rivers of yesterday.

I hope your elders teach each one you,
To value your blessings, so that you give to those,
Who have not a home, neither loving care nor joy
And help them through life's journey.

I hope your elders teach each one of you,
To value the customs and habits of those,
That are not yours, so that you understand and accept
Those who are different, look different and speak different.

- Jyoti .S, Chennai.

KNOWLEDGE AND FUN

The legend goes like this -

Theseus, the son of the king of Athens, decided to save his fellow citizens from the wrath of Minotaur.

The Minotaur was a creature with a bull's head and a human body. He lived in a labyrinth - an underground maze - beneath the palace of King Minos. Seven young men and seven young women were sent every nine years, as a sacrifice to Minotaur.

And so, when Theseus volunteered to go, his friend Ariadne secretly gave him a sword and a ball of string. How Theseus enters the labyrinth, kills the horrible monster and finds his way out of the labyrinth is what the story is all about. Ofcourse, the ball of string comes in handy.

Where and when did these mazes and labyrinths come into existence? Which is the largest and most famous church maze? How can you invent your own maze? Who invented the 'Philadelphia Maze'? Which is the world's largest hedge maze?

These are some of the questions that this very interesting book answers.

"When we think of mazes, we usually think of them as puzzles to solve... The problem with these mazes is to trace the path which leads to the middle and then the way out. But these puzzle mazes are a relatively recent invention in the history of mazes."

So, if you are 'puzzled' over what this is all about and you want to know more so that you are out of the 'maze', go on and make sure you read this book!

Title : How Amazing
Authors : Charles Snape and Heather Scott
Published in India by : Foundation Books, 4764/2A, 23, Ansari Road, Daryaganj, New Delhi - 110 002.
Available at : Scholastic India (P) Ltd.
Price : Rs.100/-

GOKULAM ART GALLERY

G.M. SUPRIYA,
Std. VII, St. Anne's High School, Mumbai.

MAYURI, Age 13,
Little Angel High School, Mumbai.

KALAIVANI,
Std. IX, A.E.C.S., Mumbai.

B. SANTOSH,
Std. V, St. Mary's School, Hubli.

D. PRABAVATI,
Std. X , C.S.I. Ewart School, Chennai.

The word 'internet' is familiar to one and all. It is the word on everybody's lips.

No doubt, the internet is a key to a faster and more efficient way of sending mail. It is the place for the best of games and updates on any information. I agree that there are also a number of sites that relate to our studies.

However, we should remember that an overdose of anything is unhealthy and dangerous. When we sit glued to the internet, remember, we are forgetting to play outdoor games. We need the physical exercise. Our eyes also get affected. We must also realise that while there are very many good things to learn from the net, one can also fall prey to the evils of it!

- Srividya Shankar, Std VIII, South Point H.S., Kolkata

Dear Srividya,

Please let us have your residential address at the earliest.

-Editor

IN REVERSE DIRECTION

Many cars these days have a funny horn or rather some odd kind of music playing when they move in reverse direction. This they call the 'reverse horn'.

It is a disgrace however, to have a national song like 'Vande Mataram' being played for this. It is bad enough to have a reverse horn but worse still to have national songs being played. Will it be 'Jana Gana Mana' next? I sincerely hope not.

The other feeling I get on listening to this music, is that it symbolically says that our nation is moving in the reverse (backward) direction.

- C.Gayathri, Std VIII, Jawahar School, Neyveli.

ACT NOW!

A stitch in time saves nine goes the old English proverb. A person who doesn't do things in time has to repent in the long run.

There is no way we can get back the lost time and we can do nothing but repent for not having utilized our time.

Now-a-days we are discussing the matters of environmental pollution, deforestation, global warming, etc. But these are serious threats to the survival of mankind. We have to take effective steps immediately to save our earth for

INTERNET A BOON OR A CURSE?

the future. Any delay will be an irrepairable loss to our own existence. If our forests are to be saved, it must be today, not tomorrow when all trees would have been cut. Time is precious. So, we have to be alert and do things at the right moment, without postponing them any further.

- Shayoni Dasgupta, Std. VIII, Kendriya Vidyalaya, Kolkata.

DAMAGE TO PUBLIC PROPERTY

Damage to public property has become a major problem. It is the duty of every citizen to protect his country from all dangers. We must remember that when we damage roads, buses and buildings, it affects us directly or indirectly because, very often we are the ones put to inconvenience. During riots, many buses are burnt. We must prevent these unsocial activities.

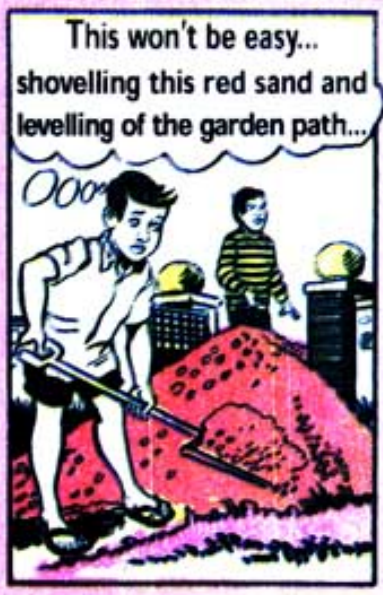
We must remember that it is our money which is used by the government for the development of public property. Hence damage caused to public property is like a loss to our own property. Let us join hands and prevent these acts.

- T.S.Rajamurugan, Std.VIII, Sainik School, Udumalpet.

BALU THE BULLY

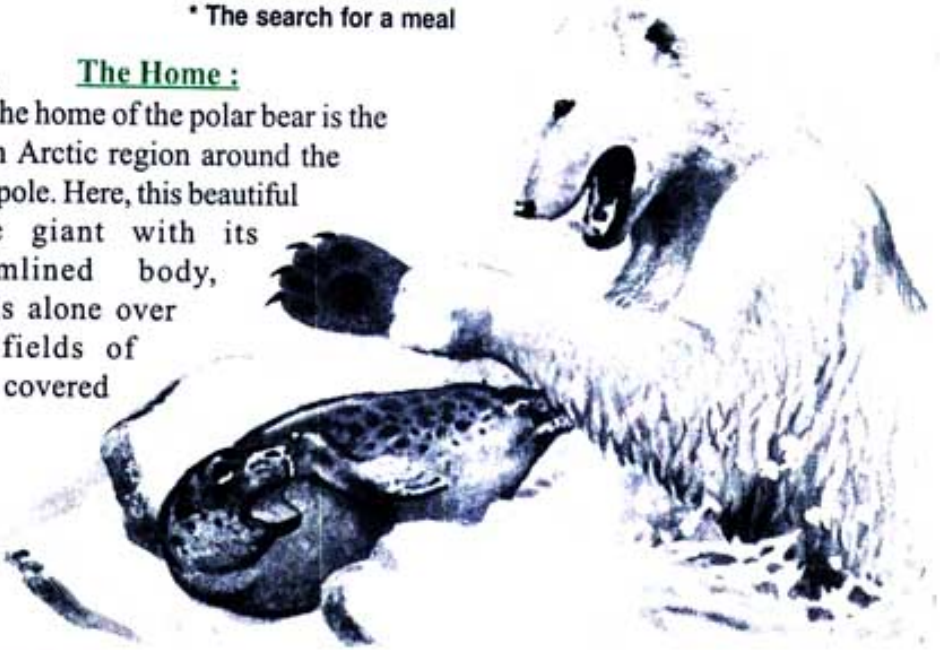
Story : Kausikan

Illustration : Chellappan



Hi Balu! I'm so sorry I teased you. I'll attend to this work. Don't you worry.
Sure! Thanks a ton!
Just relax Balu! This will be over in just ten minutes.
How kind of you!
That looks perfect! A job well done! You kept your word!
That was no big deal.
Puff... Puff... Atlast...
Well, where's the hundred rupee note you were talking about? I can't find it here.
Ha! Ha! That was just a fib to get the work done by you!
Balu! What are you upto? Aren't those thorns poking you?
Why wouldn't they? I deserve it. Should have known better than to cross swords with someone older and stronger than me.

* The search for a meal



THE WHITE GIANTS

The Home :

The home of the polar bear is the frozen Arctic region around the north pole. Here, this beautiful white giant with its streamlined body, travels alone over vast fields of snow covered ice. It often rides on floating islands, called ice floes, across hundreds of kilometers of open ocean. It is a very good swimmer!

The mother and the cub :

Most polar bears stay on the move all year long. But the females with the young, stay in dens during the winter. Before the dark winter days begin, the female finds an ice cave below the surface of the snow. Down in this cave her cubs are born. The mother and her cubs spend the winter months huddled together. The mother doesn't eat at all, but lives on the fat stored up in her body. The cubs live on her milk.

The search for a meal :

Polar Bears are great travellers. They travel over 600 miles a year, roaming through the cold darkness in their endless search for seals to eat. They look for holes in the ice that show where the seals are. The seals swimming below the ice make these holes so that they can come up to fill their lungs with air. The polar bear waits for hours at one of these breathing holes. When a seal pops its head up, the bear scoops the seal out of the water with one swipe of its mighty paw. Groups of polar bears also feed on bodies of dead whales that have been washed ashore. Polar bears

* Marine Iguana

* Monitor lizard

IN THE WILD

are mainly meat eaters, but they also eat roots, berries, plants and even seaweeds during summer.

- M. Deepak, Std. VIII ,
K.V. Sulur, Coimbatore.

LIZARDS

The order 'lizards' comprises of house lizards, garden lizards, chameleons, skinks and monitor lizards. There are about 2800 species of lizards in the world, of which 155 species are found in India. They dwell mostly on trees or in the ground.

The biggest lizard in the world is the **komodo dragon** found in the Indonesian islands. It is 300 cms long and weighs about 140 kgs. The smallest

* Gila monster

lizard is the Caribbean dwarf gecko. It's maximum length is 4 cm and it weighs barely 2 gms. The **water monitor** is India's largest lizard.

There is only one species of marine lizard - the **marine iguana.** This lives in the Galapagos islands. The flying lizard or **draco** has a modified wing - like structure on either side of the body for gliding from one branch to another. The **green iguana** is the only herbivorous lizard.

House lizards, garden lizards, chameleons and skinks feed on insects and small vertebrates. **Monitor lizards** feed on insects, frogs, small birds and rodents. Chameleons can change their colour according to the environment. None of the lizards found in India are poisonous. There are only two poisonous lizards in the world - the **gila monster** and the **beaded lizard.** Though the komodo dragon is not poisonous in the usual sense of term, its saliva contains a deadly mix of bacteria and, because of this, it's bite is fatal. Cases of food poisoning are sometimes attributed to house lizards falling into the food. The flesh of the house lizard is not poisonous. But, since the lizard carries a load of salmonella and other bacteria in it's stomach, if this contaminates the food, food poisoning can occur.

(Compiled from the book : 'Snakes and other Reptiles.')

- V. Srivatsan, Std. IX, Bethel
Mat. Hr. Sec. School, Chennai.

* Draco

LOST IN A FORT

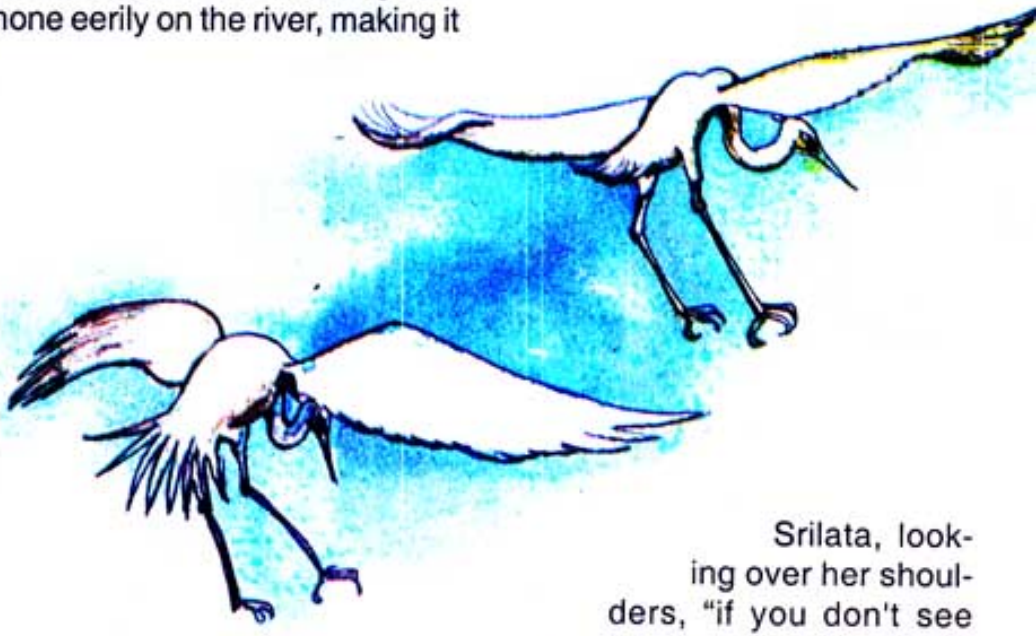
The children set out on their exciting journey very early on Sunday morning. They had persuaded their parents to pack their lunch so that they could spend the whole day in the forest.

Dawn was breaking and the first rays of the morning sun shone eerily on the river, making it look like a huge glistening serpent sleeping on the black, forbidding rocks.

Srilata, who had assumed leadership of the group, lead the way. Prabhu and Venkat walked side by side in the middle. Ambika, who was leafing through a book in the dim light, brought up the rear.

"Ambika, will you put that book down", commanded Srilata, looking over her shoulders, "if you don't see where you are headed, you are sure to trip over something and break your neck."

"I will be all right", said Ambika. "Actually I've already read about Bhagyalakshmi's fort in this book that I found in my father's collection. There is a picture of the fort



here, which I want you to see."

The children quickly gathered around Ambika

and peered at the picture. It showed an enormous edifice sitting snugly on the shoulder of a hill. It had high walls made of huge slabs of rock. A river could be seen flowing near one of its walls. A deep moat surrounded the fort. The moat had two or three drawbridges, facing which were huge wooden doors braced by iron girdles. Pointed iron spikes further protected the doors.

"I wonder if the river shown here is the same as this one", said Venkat.

"That is what I am wondering too", said Ambika, "the book does not mention the name of the river."

Ambika turned a few pages and showed a picture of a gallant lady on a white stallion and said, "this is Rani Bhagyalakshmi on her stallion Selvam. Doesn't she look the picture of courage and valour?"

L. Balasubramaniam

It had by now become fairly bright. The children concentrated on their walk and their conversation dried up. They kept to the bank of the river, which passed through the forest. As they walked, a flock of egrets standing in the shallow water, lying in wait for frogs and fishes, took fright and glided away towards the sky. The milk-white wings of the birds was quite a contrast to the dark river. The flow of the river was quite swift here and the children could hear the gurgle of water cascading over rocks and stones. Every now and then a fish playfully leapt out of the river and fell back with a splash.

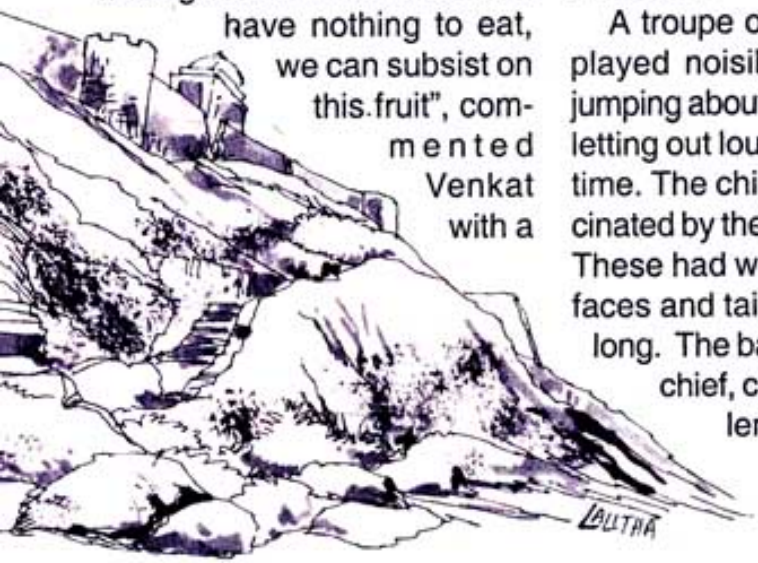
Their path was strewn with boulders of all sizes. They often had to walk around the larger ones. The boulders looked as if they were polished and were black as coal. Clumps of bushes and small trees grew inbetween the boulders. Butterflies flitted on the beautiful pink flowers of these bushes. Once or twice the children saw large lizards slithering on the rocks or hiding in crevices.

There were not many trees along their way, and these were not very large. The trees were laden with sweet-smelling yellow fruits that attracted a variety of birds. These birds had already begun devouring the fruits with a frenzy and the din and flutter that they made was welcome in the otherwise silent and eerie atmosphere. The birds frequently dropped succulent fruits that fell on the ground with a plop.

Venkat picked one fruit and tasted it. "Hm, not bad", he declared, "it's almost like grapes. Want to try some?"

Prabhu ate one, but was not much impressed. The girls did not show any interest.

"If we get lost in the forest and have nothing to eat, we can subsist on this fruit", commented Venkat with a laugh.



"What stupid ideas come to your mind, Venkat! Look, you are frightening poor Prabhu", said Srilata, putting a comforting hand around her brother. "Don't worry Prabhu, nobody is going to get lost."

At a turn in the river, they suddenly came upon a small herd of chital deer that had come to the bank for a drink. The deer took to their heels, the males shaking their horns in exasperation. But they did not go away altogether. They stood at the edge of the forest with their ears erect, eyes keenly watching the intruders and noses flared up for picking up their scent. Every now and then, they stamped one of their forefeet in agitation. The children were glad to see that after they had gone a little distance, the deer returned to the water.

A troupe of Hanuman langurs, played noisily on a tree ahead, jumping about on the branches and letting out loud hoops from time to time. The children were most fascinated by the babies in the troupe. These had white fur, black impish faces and tails that seemed extra long. The babies were full of mischief, chasing each other relentlessly and trying to pull down their companions from their perches.

The sun was now almost up and it was becoming hotter. The children decided to take rest. They sat on a rock projecting into the river with their feet dangling in the water. They found the flow of the cool water over their dusty, tired feet quite soothing. They opened their lunch packets and munched away in silence.

After a while they resumed their walk. They had now left the village far behind. It was no longer visible to

them for they were now in the middle of the forest. There was, however, no sign of the ruin.

"Illangovan has got it all wrong," said Ambika at last as she leaned against a tree to let the others catch up with her. "We have been walking for hours now. He had said that he had come upon the ruin within half an hour."

The children were getting slightly disappointed. Were their hours of walking going to be in vain? It was now approaching noon and soon they would have to turn back.

Srilata had an idea. "Let us abandon the river and walk into the forest. Possibly the river has changed course and is flowing far from the fort", she said.

The children pondered over this. What Srilata said could be true! They had studied in their geography lesson that many rivers do change their courses. Anyway, there seemed to be no point in following the river any farther, for the land ahead of them was now level and they could see far into the horizon and there was no sign of any ruin. If it existed at all, it was not within the next four or five kilometres. They couldn't possibly walk beyond that, for they had to get back in time. They decided to follow Srilata's suggestion.

The children were getting slightly disappointed. Were their hours of walking going to be in vain?

The walk became more difficult now, for they had to make their way through the thick vegetation. But they liked it. It was cool and breezy under the shade of the trees. They walked for about half an hour and then suddenly the forest gave way to a vast meadow, and in the middle of the meadow they saw a huge pile of rocks a few hundred feet high. At first they took it for a hill, for trees and creepers grew all over it and the slabs of rock were overgrown with moss. But on closer inspection, they noticed huge columns lying prostrate on the ground and a few arches, which had collapsed. Remnants of the wall could be seen and through the portions of the wall that had mouldered they could look into the fort to see a large complex of buildings. The ruin was not far away from where they stood.

"We have found it," shouted Venkat, doing a little waltz on the ground.

The children held each other's hands and looked awestruck at the crumbled buildings.

To be continued...

CHOCOLATE SPECIALS FOR THE NEW YEAR

CHOCOLATE MOUSSE

Things needed :

* Milk (250 ml)
* Egg yolk (of 7 - 8 eggs)
* Sugar (50 gms)
* Cooking chocolate (50 gms)
* White cream (fresh)

Method : Boil the milk. Mix the egg yolk and the sugar in a bowl. Stir briskly with a spoon until the sugar dissolves. Pour the hot milk into this bowl and mix well. Add the cooking chocolate and stir.

Place the cup that contains the cream in a big bowl filled with ice cubes and cold water. Stir the cream gently while it is in the bowl, until the cream becomes light and whipped.

Pour this cold, whipped cream over the chocolate mixture. Take small glass or porcelain bowls and fill them with the 'chocolate mousse.' Refrigerate, allow it to set and serve chilled.

- Vidya, Std. VIII, Kolkatta

COLD CHOCOLATE PUDDING

Things needed :

* Dark chocolate (amul) - 1 cup
* White chocolate (milky bar) - 1 cup
* Marie biscuit (powdered) - 1½ cups
* Sugar (powdered) - ½ cup
* Hot water - 2 cups
* Milk (required amount)

Method : Place the two varieties of chocolates in two different bowls. Then place these bowls in vessels containing hot water and melt the chocolates (do not heat directly).

Mix the sugar powder and the biscuit powder in a separate dish. Add just enough milk to make a dough. Spread the dough evenly in a shallow tray. Pour the melted dark chocolate over this dough. Then pour the white chocolate making any pretty pattern, so that both the dark brown and white colours are seen.

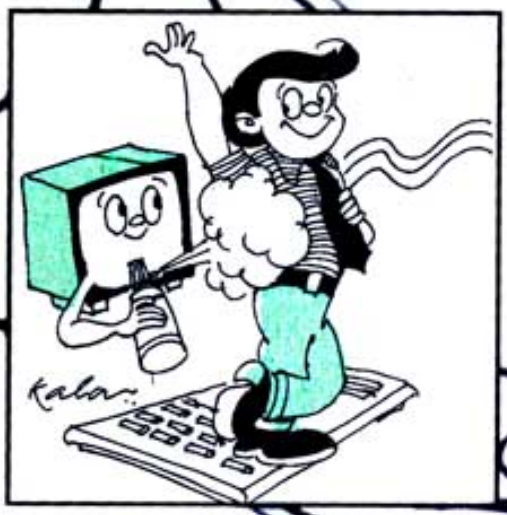
Decorate it with gems, cashew and badam. Refrigerate for two hours and then serve cold.

- R. Sandhya, Std. X, K.V.I.I.T., Mumbai.

The Latest And The Hottest

A computer system, which enables you to enjoy the aroma of the delicacies, cooked by Sanjay Kapoor in his Khana Khajana show or the sweet smell of flowers when Shah Rukh Khan and his girl friend are chasing each other in Nishat and Shalimar gardens of Srinagar, is not far away. As Amjad Khan fires shots in the film 'Shole', a movie fan might be able to smell the smoke and gunpowder.

The next time online shoppers visit a cosmetics website, they can actually smell the different designer perfumes and lotions. Those who go online shopping for chocolates might be able to smell the candy store, or be enticed by the smell of roses and daisies at a 'virtual florist' or even inhale the heady aroma of Brazilian coffee at an online coffee shop!



One of the hottest technologies now under development is scent-enabled software. It is even known by a bunch of other names, including 'smell and shop' and 'scent-stream technology' and the like.

Computer Wizards are now involved in the race to perfume the internet. Leading the chase is a quartet of companies - DigiScents (California), TriSenx (Georgia), Aroma jet (Texas) all from the US and

the Israel-based Senselt technologies. All four are reported to be using almost identical technology.

How did the idea originate?

While vacationing on a Florida beach two years ago, DigiScents' co-founders, Joel Bellenson and Dexter Smith, struck on this idea.

While enjoying the flavours of tropical drinks, the fragrance of suntan lotion and the soothing aroma of the ocean, they thought about ways to send these smells over the internet for others to enjoy.

How does the system function?

Smell can theoretically be digitized, and there are researchers working to do exactly that. Major companies in advertising packaged goods like candy and soups will soon begin using DigiScents' digital smell-sensing technology to recreate thousands of odours via a personal computer - based smell amplifying device.

The device, which looks like a small stereo speaker, connects to a PC and can blend 128 basic scents into a much larger number of smells.

It is a cross between a multimedia computer speaker and an ink jet printer. In effect, the computer "prints" scents onto a medium where they are then vapourised and enjoyed by the user via a moving air stream.

Just like the red, yellow and blue dots, that create millions of colours on a computer monitor, the system combines essential oils to create a wide combination of scents.

Users can then enjoy perfumed tracks from their favourite movies and music. They can also select the candy, soap or perfume they are going to buy from online shops, based on the smell that they emenate.

- G.V. Joshi

GOKULAM

2002

JANUARY						
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13	14	15	16	17	18	19
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27	28	29	30	31		

FEBRUARY						
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BREATHING IN AND BREATHING OUT

● **J. Vishnu, Bangalore-3**

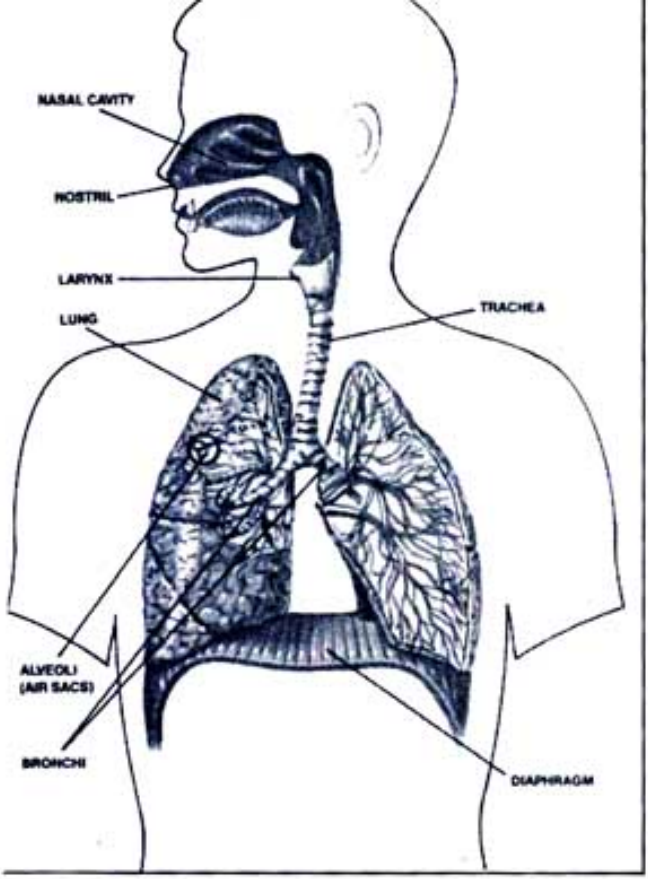
? Why do we breathe and how do we breathe?

! Breathing is a process by which we get oxygen from the air that surrounds us and send out carbon-di-oxide from our body. Oxygen is essential for the survival of humans and most other living things. This gas is used by the body cells to break down food and to obtain the necessary energy to carry out the body's functions. In this process, cells use up the oxygen and produce carbon-di-oxide, a gas that can be harmful if it is accumulated in the cells and therefore must be removed. The interchange of these gases between the atmosphere and the lungs is called respiration.

Our respiratory system is responsible for taking oxygen from the atmosphere into the lungs and transferring oxygen to the blood. At the same time, as the blood circulates, it removes the carbon-di-oxide building up in the cells and transports it to the lungs so that it can be expelled from the body.

The respiratory apparatus is really a tube that begins in the nose and continues through the pharynx, the larynx and the trachea. The trachea divides into two branches – the right and left bronchus. Each bronchus enters into the corresponding lung. In the lungs, each bronchus divides into many fine tubes called bronchioles, which end up, as tiny hollow bags called air sacs which get filled with air. These air sacs enlarge when we inhale and they contract when we exhale. The air sacs are surrounded by alveoli, which are air filled spaces, and they look like clusters of grapes. The exchange of gases takes place in the alveoli. Each lung contains 300 millions of alveoli which have a surface area equivalent to just less than a quarter of a basket ball court.

• the alveoli



The lungs are enclosed in the thoracic cage which is composed of the sternum in front, the vertebral column in back, the ribs encircling the chest and the diaphragm below. The ribs are provided with external and internal intercostal muscles. By the contraction and relaxation of these muscles the volume of thoracic cavity can either be reduced or increased.

Respiration takes place in two stages- inspiration and expiration. Inspiration is the entry of air into the lungs and expiration is the expulsion of air from the lungs. We inhale air through the nose or mouth. The nose and the mouth are joined in the back of the mouth in an area called pharynx. The air inhaled goes to the lungs through the windpipe (trachea).

During inspiration, the diaphragm contracts and pulls the lower surface of the lungs downwards. At the same time the external intercostal muscles of the ribs contract and pull the ribs upward and outward. Thus, the thoracic volume increases, creating a negative pressure which is less than atmospheric pressure, and therefore causes air to enter the lungs.

When inspiration is finished, the muscles relax, so that the lungs and thoracic cage undergo an elastic contraction back to their original position, which is sufficient to expel the air from the lung. In forced expiration, the contraction of internal intercostal muscles pushes the ribs downward and the relaxation of the diaphragm pushes the lungs upward so that the volume of the thoracic cavity now is reduced. As a result, the pressure in the lungs becomes higher than the atmospheric pressure and the air rushes out through the air passages.

The process of respiration is controlled by the respiratory center in the brain. Normally, a new born baby breathes 60 times per minute. A 15 year old child breathes 20 times per minute and an adult 16 to 18 times.

Dr.G.GANESAN, Rajapalayam.

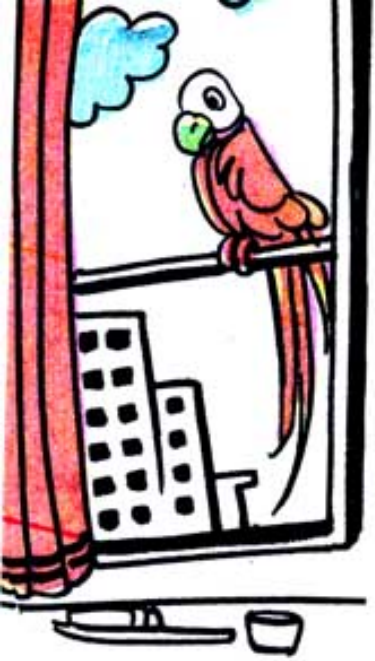
Archie, Jo

Mini was a pet macaw of Archie and Jo. Actually she was special and originally belonged to a circus. Mini was very intelligent and was taught many tricks by the circus owner. One day there was a fire accident in the circus camp. A badly wounded Mini somehow managed to escape and landed in the children's garden. Archie and Jo had found her and nursed her back to health. Since then, the three of them became good friends and they helped in solving mysteries for Inspector Tendulkar whom they called uncle Titto.

One afternoon, Mini was waiting outside the school gate for the children to come. She knew it would be a while before they came and hence took off for a flight. She flew across the road and perched herself comfortably on the window sill of a flat, in a tall building opposite the school. She sat there for a while and looked inside the house. It was a modern flat, very well furnished. On one of the sofas, sat an old lady.

Curiosity got the better of Mini, and she began to squawk. She went on and on. After quite some time the old lady turned and said, "Oh poor bird! Are you hungry? Let me see what I can give you." Mini saw that she got up with great difficulty, picked up a walking stick and slowly walked to the kitchen. She came back with a piece of bread and some water. She walked slowly to the window sill and placed the plate for Mini to eat and sat down on a chair near the window. Mini was not particularly hungry. But to please the lady she ate the bread and drank the water. Mini, being smart, could understand that the lady in the flat was all alone. Hence she made it a point to visit the lady every afternoon.

On a Friday afternoon, Mini as usual went to the eighth floor flat of Mrs. Paniwalla. The moment she sat on the window sill, she could sense that something was wrong. Mrs. Paniwalla was not to be seen. Instead there was the loud noise of the television. As Mini sat on the window and peeped inside, she found two men moving around the room, busy collecting items like the computer and



and Mini

music system. A third man was peeping into the cupboard.

Mini knew that something was wrong. To assure herself, she started to squawk. Usually Mrs. Paniwalla would have come to feed her even if she was other wise busy. But today she did not. One of the men turned around and looked at Mini. But he thought of her as just a bird and ignored her. Mini flew down to the front of the building. She saw a big van parked there. The driver was standing in front of the truck smoking, and from time to time his eyes were looking up at the direction of the flat of Mrs. Paniwalla. Mini understood. There were robbers looting Mrs Paniwalla's house in broad day light! She rushed towards the school.

Mini was excited to see the children. She gave a series of squawks and screeches and tugged frantically at the sleeves of Archie's shirt. She made short flights in the direction of the building and returned to Jo's shoulder. The children understood that there was a problem, and they cycled to the nearby police station to meet uncle Titto.

Luckily, inspector Titto was just getting ready to go out. When he saw the children, he could sense that something was wrong. Titto jumped into the police jeep with two other constables, Archie and Jo. Mini flew ahead.

Mini stopped at Mrs. Paniwalla's flat. "Uncle Titto since we don't know what exactly has gone wrong, allow Jo and me to go first and find out what is going on. Mini has been visiting some person here for a few days. May be there is something wrong." said Archie.

As they reached the building, Mini flew up to the window sill to show the children Mrs. Paniwalla's flat. Archie nodded to Jo and they whispered to each other as to what should be done. Then they quickly took the lift and landed in front of the flat of Mrs. Paniwalla. As per their instruction, Mini flew and perched herself on the window sill.

Archie rang the bell. There was no response. He rang the bell again. The door opened just a little bit and one rough looking person peeped out. He gave an ugly sneer at the sight of Archie who had a note book in his hand.

"Who are you? What do you want?" asked the man not opening the door. Archie put on a sorry face and said "We are coming from school. We are collecting funds for social work. We will do some work for you like sweeping, cleaning or polishing your shoes and you can pay us a few rupees."

"Go away, there is no work. We are busy." Saying so, the intruder was about to close the door, when Archie quickly dropped his school bag in the gap and still pleading, said "But sir, where is the owner auntie? She had asked us to come today at this time. She had promised work. Where is she?"

The rough looking man was now a little puzzled and said "She might have asked you to come but she has gone out and she did not give us any instructions. Now run along both of you." He kicked the school bag and as the door slammed, Archie and Jo heard a voice calling from inside. "What is it Buntie? Any problem?" Archie and Jo quickly jumped into the lift and went down to the ground floor. Mini showed them the parked van and they walked towards it.

"Uncle, is somebody moving out?" Jo asked innocently to the driver who was restlessly looking up and down the road. "Why are you interested?" he asked. Jo continued to talk. "Uncle, this Raj movers, is it the famous Raj movers who advertise on TV?" Now the driver was a little confused. He did not know if there was a Raj movers who's commercials appeared on TV. Hence he did not want to disagree. "Ah yes! Yes! The same Raj movers. But what has that got to do with you. You get lost."

While he was engrossed in this conversation with Jo, Archie slowly sneaked near the van and from the other side pulled away the ignition key. "Come Jo, it's getting late," shouted Archie and the two children walked away as if nothing had happened.

The children ran. They turned the corner where the police jeep was parked. Inspector Titto ran towards them and asked "Come now tell me, what did you see?"

Archie and Jo told him about the rough fellow who opened the door and the other voice they heard from inside. The inspector explained, "From the way you describe it all, I think there are a few men inside and

there is a driver outside. They must have tied up or even killed the old lady. These people are dangerous and may be armed." As he was talking, Archie handed over the ignition key. Inspector Titto stared at it for a moment in total disbelief and suddenly burst out laughing and said, "You little devils, you take a lot of risks."

Then they quickly discussed the plan of action. The plan worked perfectly. Ofcourse there was a lot of excitement. Mini kept the van driver busy and distracted. She pecked at the windows of the car, swooped down near the driver's head and circled around the car. Inspector Titto, the two constables and the children sneaked into the building and went up the lift.

The burglars eventually had no choice but to surrender. They had not expected the children to come back with the police! But they did not give up easily.

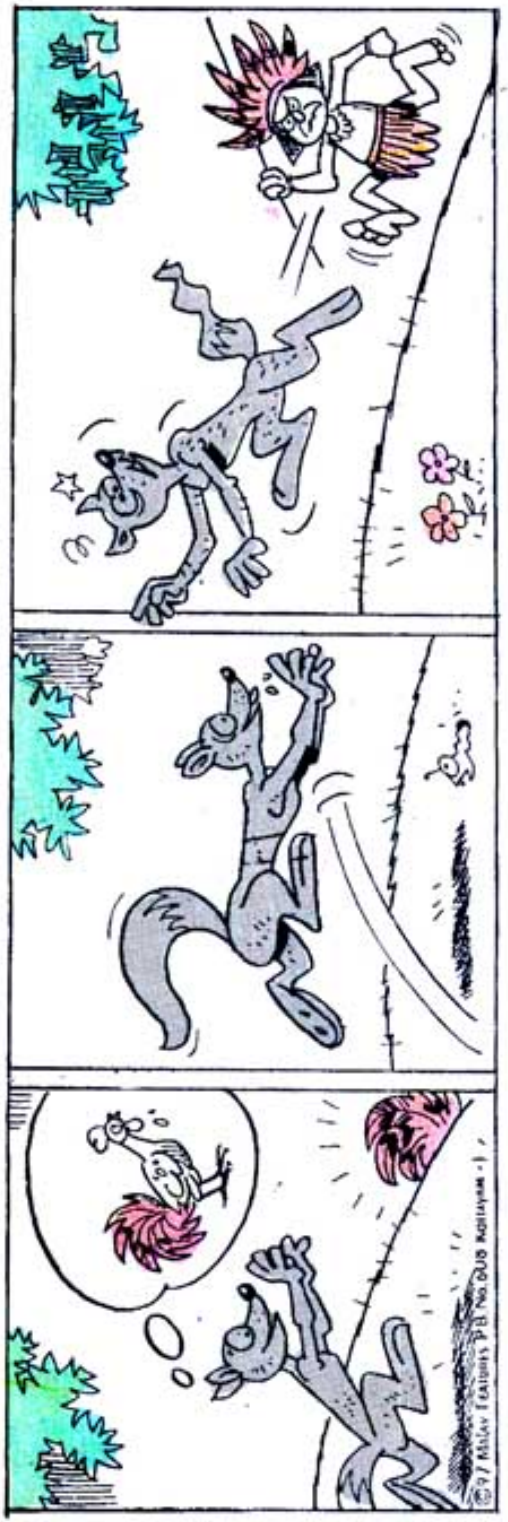
"Where is the lady of the house? Come on, own up or you'll be in trouble," warned Inspector Titto in a stern voice.

"Oh yeah! Let's see who'll be in trouble man. Inspector, you drop the gun or I'll shoot" A voice boomed from behind.

Titto froze when he saw a man dragging a half conscious Mrs. Paniwalla. Her hands were tied and a tape was stuck across her mouth. The man was pointing a gun at her.

"Inspector. Don't think you are too smart. Release my man and back up near the wall," roared the ugly man. The Inspector recognized him as the criminal Jagga who had recently escaped from jail. Trying hard to buy time, he said "Jagga don't do anything foolish. Police have surrounded this building. You cannot escape. It's time to surrender." Jagga gave a villainous laughter and said "This lady is our ticket to freedom. You cannot do anything. Drop your gun."

Titto looked at him and slowly dropped his gun. Jagga relaxed his grip on Mrs. Paniwalla. He made her sit



down on a chair. Archie and Jo were feeling miserable that their adventure had misfired. They looked sadly at Mrs. Paniwalla.

Suddenly there was a loud screeching noise and Mini who had quietly perched herself on the ceiling fan came diving fast and hit against the eyes of Jagga. He screamed in pain and the gun dropped out of his hand. In a flash Titto caught it and the children fell on Jagga. Titto pointed the gun at Jagga while Archie and Jo untied the rope on Mrs. Paniwalla's hand and removed the tape from her mouth. The two constables swung into action and bolted the door of the room where the other two men were collecting the loot. The constables then handcuffed Jagga. The two men inside the room were hammering on the door screaming "Jagga open the door!" The arrests became easy after that.

Soon the three of them were marched to the police jeep. The driver of 'Rajmovers' van on seeing the police, tried to start the van but found the keys missing. He was also marched to the police jeep.

Mrs. Paniwalla stroked Mini and said "this bird used to come everyday." The happy lady thanked Inspector Titto for the timely appearance on the scene. The children and Mini were given a big cake to eat by Mrs. Paniwalla and you bet Mini enjoyed every bite of it!

- 'Laxsha', Mumbai.

Creative Writing

WRITING IS FUN

The biggest problem faced with creative writing is not the 'how to write' but the 'what to write'. I have always found my students with a lost look on their faces wondering what to write when a composition topic is given to them. Some of you think creatively no doubt, but creativity is not always an inborn skill. It can also be developed.

I. ***Try out these ideas and use them as a warm up to writing on your own.***

Try to think on different tracks before you write.

If you are writing about the SUN, put down all the words that come to your mind about it. For eg., heat, light, energy, power, life, seasons, day and night, life and death, dawn, hope, future, promise, God, religion, vacation, summer, beach, sunrise, beauty, painting..... As you think of these words put them down in columns or tracks. For eg. Heat, light, energy can be put under one head, whereas day, night, seasons can be put under another. You then have dawn, hope, future.. and God, religion .....

Think diversely. Let any word come to your mind. Find a track for it. You will realise that after you do this exercise you have atleast 50 -60 words. But remember these are NOT MERE WORDS, these are IDEAS. You have the material that you need.

You will then need to plan. Sort out the ideas, arrange them neatly and give it a proper presentation.

Go ahead, try doing this... start with " Shades of yellow and orange, purple and pink.... The sun was setting. Across this beautiful landscape flew a flight of birds returning to their nests."

II. ***Here is another one on cricket which is quick and real fun.***

C - Crazy catches dropped and lost,
R - Raging players rebel for a cause.
I - Interested millions to the TV are glued,
C - Clippings in the papers are strewn.
K - Keep the faith in the game we are told,
E - Enthusiasm takes over when everything is over.
T - Together, we keep this game from sinking too deep.

The above composition sounds a little poetic, but you can also keep it in prose. Write a line or two each, but make sure that the first letter of the first word goes with the spelling of cricket. Start with - C - Cricket is a game, which is loved by millions of people around the world.

- Jyoti Swaroop, Scholastic India.

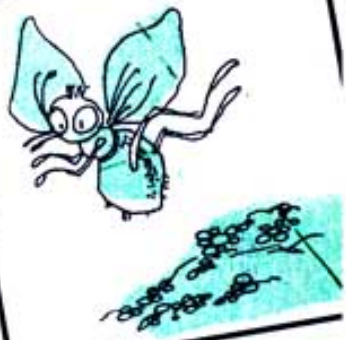
IN A NUTSHELL

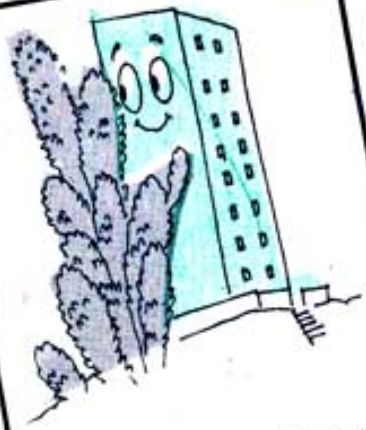
The island of Hawaii is the peak of a large mountain which is even bigger than Mount Everest. The base of Hawaii's mountain is 9000 m below sea level on the ocean floor.

The leaves of the giant victorian water lily can be more than 2 m across. They are strong enough for a child to sit upon without sinking.

The world's deserts are growing bigger. The Sahara is growing by 1.5 million hectares every year or four football pitches every minute.

Flies can see in 4000 different directions at the same time. Their eyes are made up of that number of different facets (or lenses).

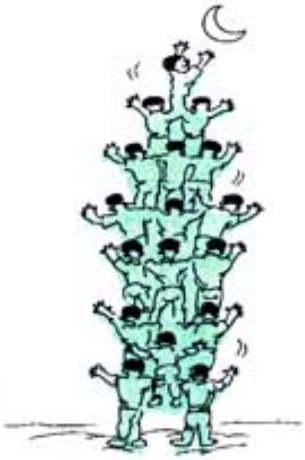




The tallest cacti are the giant saguaros. They grow up to 18 m tall, about the height of a six storey building.

An American showman known as General Tom Thumb was only 102 cm (3 ft 4 in) tall when he died in 1885 at the age of 47.

As astronauts orbit the earth, they may see the sun rise and set upto eight times between breakfast (8 am) and supper (8 pm).

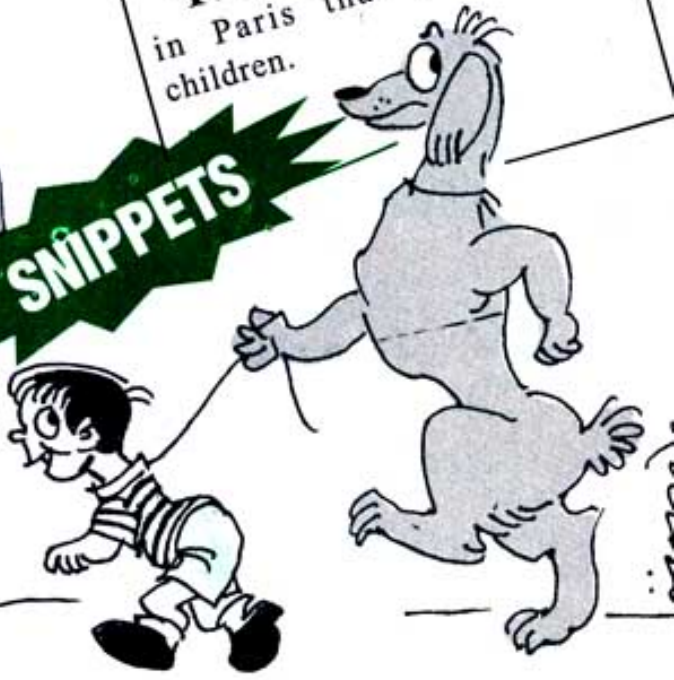


The country with the most number of people is China. It has over 1,160 million people. If they all were acrobats and were able to stand in groups of three on each others shoulders, this human column would reach up through the air and into space as far as the moon.

Most dinosaurs had small brains compared to their body size. The Stegosaurus' brain was no bigger than a walnut.

There are more dogs in Paris than there are children.

SNIPPETS

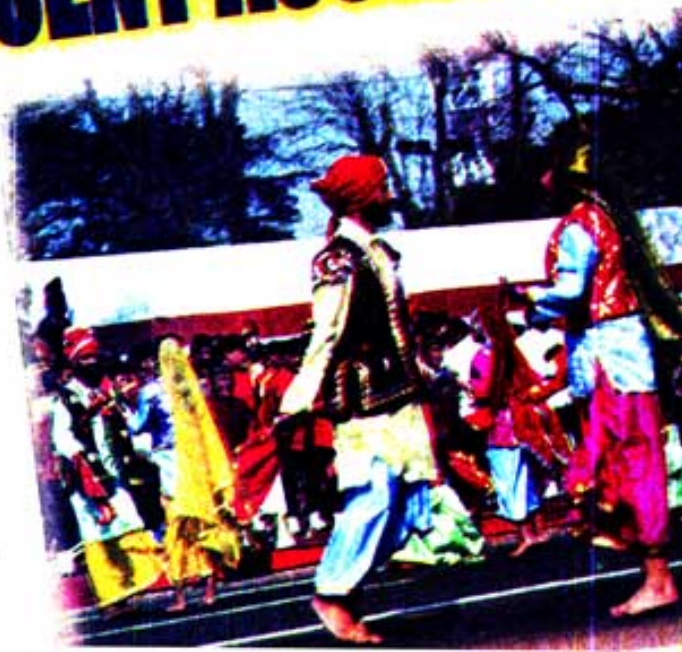


In the United States, there are more guns than people.

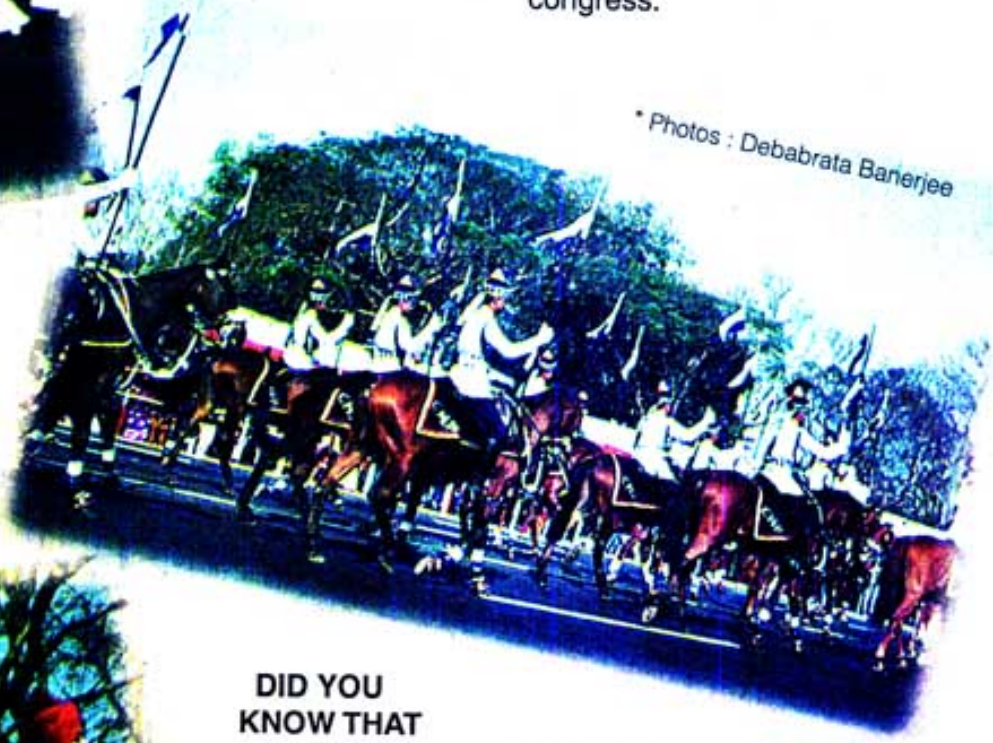
- Abhishek Gopal, Std VIII, St. John's Vestry Anglo Indian School, Trichy.

EVOLUTION OF THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY

January 26 is Republic Day - a day that is marked with pomp and pageant, a day that recalls the patriotic fervour of our freedom fighters, a day when the march past of the three armed forces (army, navy and airforce) takes place, a day marked by massive parades and colourful,



picturesque display of the folk dances of India, a day when the President of India hoists the tri-colour and takes salute of the contingents of the armed forces, a day when prestigious national awards are presented, a day that is celebrated as a National Holiday...



* Photos : Debabrata Banerjee

DID YOU KNOW THAT

- It was as early as in 1922 that Mahatma Gandhi first conceived the idea of a constituent assembly elected by the people, when he stated "Swaraj is our birth right. Swaraj will not be a free gift of the British..."
- In the Calcutta session of the Indian National Congress of 1929, the leaders took a pledge to achieve complete Independence for India and January 26, 1930 was chosen as Independence day.
- It was however, only in 1935 that the above idea was officially put forward by the Indian National congress.
- The British hardly paid any attention to the demands made by India for a constituent assembly until the end of the second world war.
- Mr. Atlee the then Labour Prime Minister of England stated on March 15, 1946, "is it any wonder that to-day India claims that she should herself have freedom to decide her own destiny? What form of government

is to replace the present regime is for India to decide; but our desire is to help her to set up forthwith the machinery for making that decision."

- The first constituent assembly was then set up in 1946 according to the Cabinet Mission Plan.
- Although the constituent assembly was set up in 1946, India was not yet a sovereign body. The constituent assembly was born with certain limitations, and was still under the final authority of the British Parliament.
- While the Congress agreed to join the constituent assembly, the Muslim League refused to do so.
- The Muslim League demanded two separate constitution making bodies - one for the people of 'Pakistan' and the other for the people of 'Hindustan' and hence when the British finally decided to leave, the country had to be divided.
- It was finally through the Indian Independence Act that the Cabinet Mission Plan was discarded and the sovereignity of the country was established.
- The Constituent Assembly was re - assembled and at the stroke of midnight on August 14 - 15, the elected leaders gathered in the Central Hall of Parliament and undertook a pledge to serve the nation and India became free.
- In the first session of the sovereign Constituent Assembly of India, Dr. Rajendra Prasad, its first President spoke of a classless society for India.
- Thereafter a committee was set up to draft the Constitution headed by Dr. Ambedkar. The Draft Constitution was given a final shape and form and was presented to the Constituent Assembly.
- On November 26, 1949, the Constituent Assembly adopted and enacted the Constitution.
- The new Constitution came into force on January 26, 1950 (this date was fixed to recall the earlier first official pledge that was taken on the same day in the year 1930) and India became a **Sovereign Democratic Republic.**

THE DRAFTING COMMITTEE

From Left to Right:
Dr. B.R. Ambedkar (Chairman), Alladi Krishnaswami Ayyer, T.T. Krishnamachari, N. Gopalaswami Ayyangar, K.M. Munshi, Syed Mohammed Saadullah

LET US SALUTE OUR NATION
VANDE MATARAM

- L.N.

GOKULAM

SCHOLASTIC

GALA CONTEST

Dear children,

From the over whelming response that we have had from you for this contest, we are absolutely certain that you are enjoying every bit of it. We too, from our side, find the preparation to be as enjoyable and exciting.The lucky winners of GALA CONTEST - 3 :

1. **Sunil Rinald. M**
   Chingelput, Tamil Nadu.
2. **Nisha Hosadurg,**
   Mysore,Karnataka.
3. **Vijay Ramakrishnan**
   Bangalore, Karnataka.
4. **Bhavna.V**
   Bangalore, Karnataka.

RULES AND REGULATIONS

- There will be a contest every month.
- Four lucky winners will receive a set of books worth Rs.250/- each, from Scholastic India (P) Ltd.
- Fill in the form on the next page and mail it to us.
- Strictly for school going children.
- Any number of entries can be sent by you, but no photocopies.
- All details asked for in the form must be filled in and complete. Entries without complete details will be rejected.
- Use a ball point pen to write. Write neatly and clearly.
- The person with an 'all-correct' entry is the winner. If there are more than one 'all-correct' entries, then the lucky winner/s will be decided by a draw of lot, from out of the all correct entries.
- The books will be sent to you direct by Scholastic India (Pvt) Ltd. Their decision with the choice of books is final.
- The last date for receiving entries for each contest will be mentioned in the entry form.

GOKULAM - SCHOLASTIC

GALA CONTEST - 4

ENTRY FORM

Last Date : 12.01.2002

Name : .....

Age : ..... Class: .....

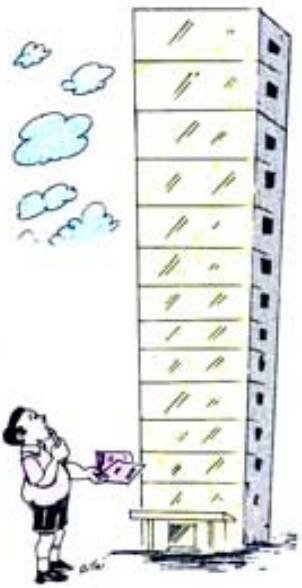
School : .....

Residential : .....

Address .....

..... Pin : .....

Signature : .....



NAME THEM RIGHT :

1. The longest railway line _____.
2. The largest rock _____.
3. The hottest planet _____.
4. The smallest bird _____.
5. The fastest aeroplane _____.
6. The busiest airport _____.
7. The tallest building _____.
8. The deepest trench _____.
9. The nearest galaxy _____.
10. The highest peak _____.

Mail to :

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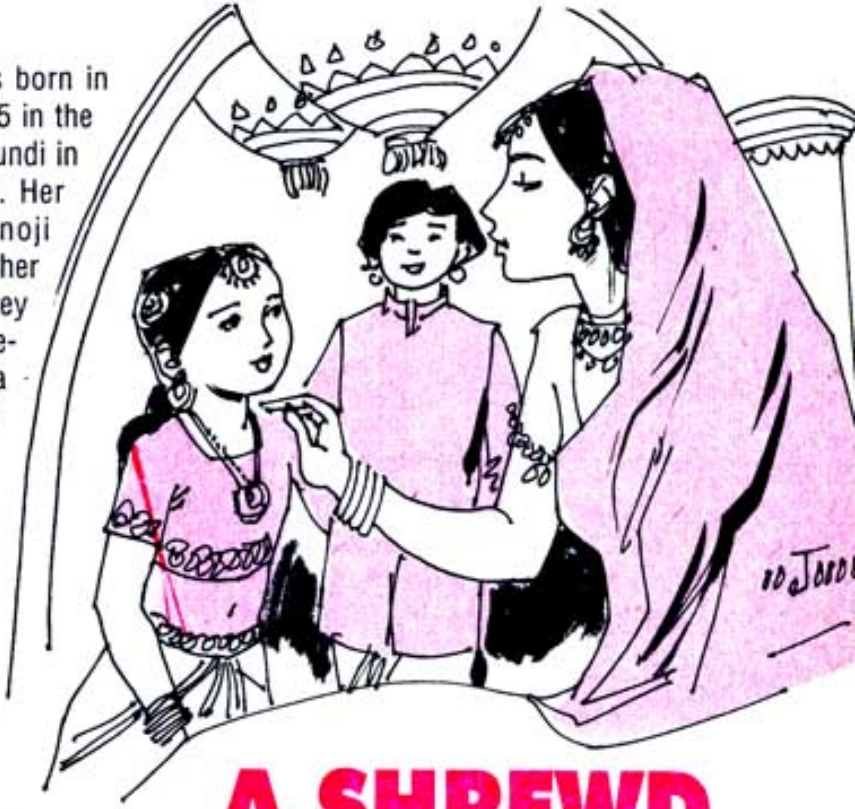


A SHREWD POLITICAL MANOEUVRE

Ahalyabai was born in the year 1725 in the town of Choundi in Maharashtra State. Her father was Manoji Shinde and her mother Susheela Devi. They belonged to a middle-class family. Ahalya was brought up in an atmosphere of devotion to god and very good behaviour.

Ahalya visited the Siva temple in the town everyday. During one such visit, an incident took place, which happened to be the turning point in her life. She was then only eight years old.

One day Malahar Rao, the ruler of Holkar State, happend to visit the Siva temple in Choundi. He was greatly impressed with the devotion and good manners of this young girl, who also happened to be there in the temple at that time.

Malahar Rao had a son by name, Khande Rao. He was his only child and successor to the kingdom. He was a spoilt child, leading a lazy, luxurious life, neglecting his education and not taking any interest in learning the State craft, warfare and other things required of a successor to the throne. He became a problem - child to his father!

Malahar Rao was thinking then that his son would change his ways if he got married. When he saw Ahalyabai, he thought that she would be the most suitable bride for his son. Ahalyabai became his daughter-in-law and soon became the mother of a boy Malerao, and a girl Mukthabai.

Noticing the talent in Ahalyabai in all fields of life, Malahar Rao gave her training in the State-craft and also warfare. During the absence of Malahar Rao, she used to look after the administration of the State efficiently. She took

A snail's eyes are at the ends of its horns and it can sleep for upto three years without waking up!

Golden poison dart frogs in Columbia, South America, are the most poisonous frogs of all. Each frog has enough poison in its skin to kill 1500 people.

(Source - fantastic facts)

- S. Swetha, Std. IX, Srividya Sec. School, Hyderabad.

Gazelle, the small African antelope, begins to run within an hour of it's birth. A two-day old gazelle can race with a full-grown horse.

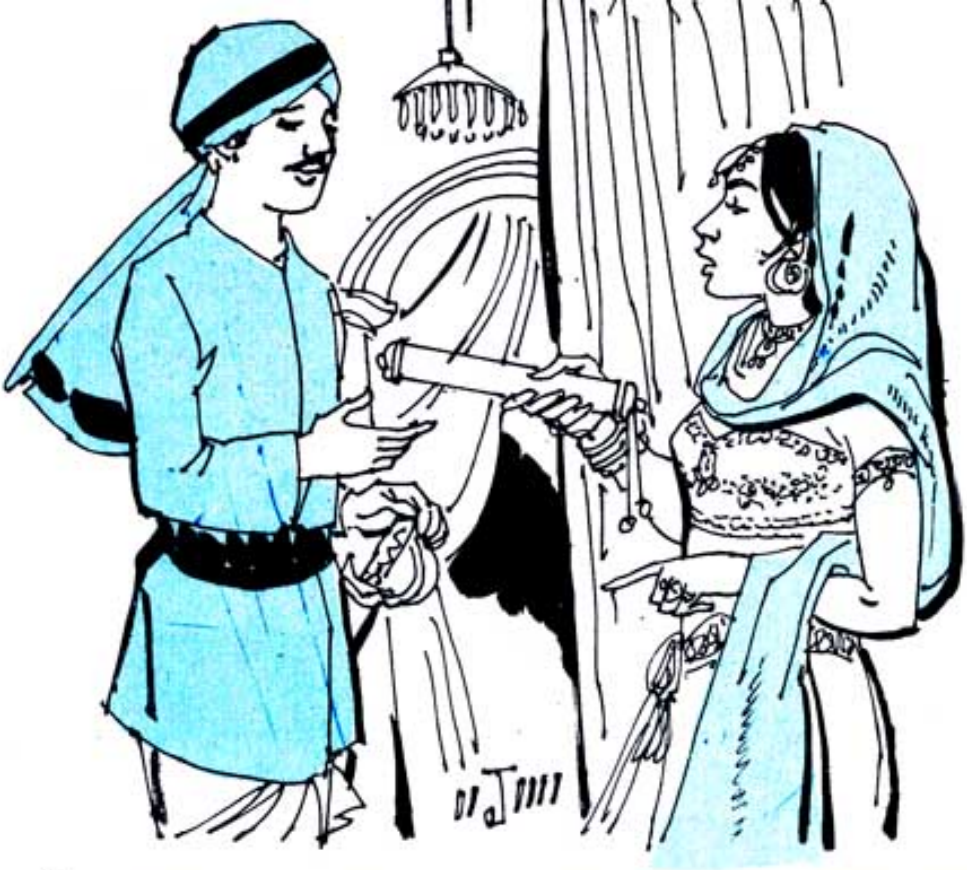
- Sampreet Hegde, Std. VIII, V.S. Pillay English Medium School, Hubli.

active part in wars and exhibited her bravery. At other times, she used to spend her time in visiting temples and making pilgrimages to sacred places.

Misfortune struck Ahalyabai. Her husband Khande Rao died in an attack on the fort of Suraj in the year 1754. According to their custom, Ahalyabai expressed her desire to commit SATI (getting burnt along with her husband on the funeral pyre) but Malahar Rao persuaded her to give up the idea. She agreed but began to live a life of severe austerity. Again misfortune struck her. Malahar Rao and her son Male Rao both died one after another within a short span. There was nobody to succeed the throne.

Taking advantage of these calamities, the neighbouring Vassal rulers Raghoba and Chandra Chud came with a huge army to annex the kingdom of Holkar. Ahalyabai did not have an army strong enough to match those of the invaders. Yet undaunted, she used her tact. She sent a letter to Raghoba:

"It has come to my notice just now that you are coming with an army to invade our kingdom. Perhaps you are of the view that I being a woman am weak and incapable of facing your treacherous attack and defending my State's independence. So long as the last of our citizens keeps his breath, you cannot dream of conquering us. Remember, you are fighting an army commanded by a woman. Even if I am defeated, what I lose is nothing compared to the shame to which you will be put to if you are defeated by a woman! So think twice before you act!"



On perusing the letter, Raghoba lost his confidence in his strength and realised the wisdom in the words of Ahalyabai. He changed his mind. He immediately sent a letter stating:

"You are mistaken. I am not coming to wage any war against you. I have no such intention. I am coming to express my condolence on your tragic bereavements and console you!"

He then left his army far away and came along with Chandra Chud to express his deep condolence to her and returned to his State. Thus Ahalyabai averted a great danger to her State by her shrewd political manoeuvre!

She shifted her capital from Indore to Maheswar, a peaceful pilgrim centre. There she renovated the old temples and built some new temples too.

The State and its citizens were more important to Ahaylabai than the interests of her own family and even her daughter.

"I will give my daughter, Mukthabai in marriage to a person who will get rid my state of the atrocities committed by the highway robbers!"

Responding to the above announcement successfully, one youth Yaswantha Rao married Mukthabai.

Ahalyabai patronised great literary persons and many musicians.

She died on August 13, 1795.

As a gesture of their gratitude to their most benevolvent ruler, the citizens installed a statue of Ahalyabai in the temples of Siva in Gaya and Vishnu in Maheswar to be worshipped along with the main deity. She is being worshipped in these temples even to this day.

- Kolar Krishna Iyer, Tirupathi.

PUZ

I. FUN WITH WORDS

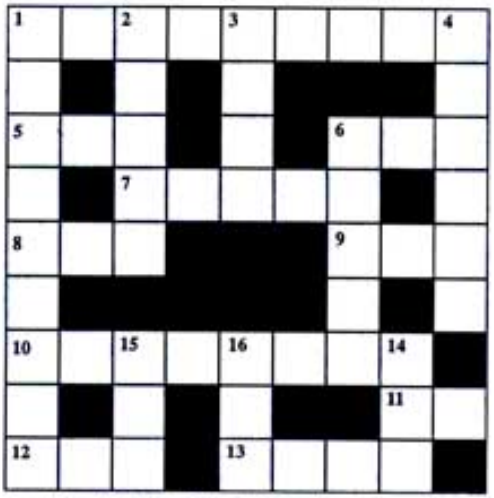
Clues Across

1. The largest mammal on earth.
5. What fishermen use to catch fish.
6. Adam and _____.
7. To come in.
8. That which we breathe.
9. A thick warm sheet used as a covering in winter.
10. Not special.
11. a, _____, the (articles)
12. What birds lay. (singular)
13. A key is of no use without a _____.

Clues Down

1. The garden city of India.
2. Speak or say something.
3. Past tense of 'go'.
4. "The capacity to do work."
6. Mistake.
14. A hairy animal resembling the bison.
15. Man's best friend.
16. Nothing.

- A. Naveen, Std. VI, K.V., Anna Nagar, Chennai.



II. WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN...

(i) a jeweller and a jailor
(ii) a scientist and a politician?
(iii) a test and a quiz?

- M. Vinodh, Vriddhachalam

III. WHO SAID IT?

1. The child is the father of the man.
2. Beauty is truth, truth beauty.
3. Common sense is not so common.
4. It is a wise father that knows his own child.
5. The ballot is stronger than the bullet.
6. Eureka! Eureka! (I have found it, I have found it!)
7. No man can serve two masters.
8. Other men live to eat. I eat to live.

- Varun Krishnan, Std V, Pondicherry.

IV. BEWITCHED!

Ask your friend to choose any number

ZLES

that is easy to remember. (This number must be less than 8 digits).

1) Ask him to double that number
2) Add 15
3) Triple that result
4) Add 33 to that total
5) Divide that answer by 6
6) Subtract the original number

What will you get as the answer?

- Shilpa A. Dhobale, Age 17, R.A. Podar College, Mumbai.

ANSWERS ON PAGE 64

V. MR. LAL MEETS MR. JEETU

Mr. Lal was going to the market when he saw Mr. Jeetu's family coming towards him. Mr. Jeetu had 3 wives and each wife had 2 boys and a girl. Each boy had 2 dogs and each dog had a bone. Each girl had 3 cats and each cat had 4 kittens. In all, how many living beings were going to the market?

Note : Only 30 secs allowed

- S. Sridhar, Std. VIII, P.S.S.Sec. School, Mylapore

VI. MEMORIALS

Find the names of the memorials built for following personalities in the given grid.

Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru, Charan Singh, Rajiv Gandhi and Lal Bahadur Shastri.

- P. Uthara Priyadharshini, Std. VIII B, K.V., Air Force Station, Thane.

A	B	V	E	E	R	B	H	O	O	M	I
C	D	I	E	F	G	H	S	I	J	K	K
R	A	J	G	H	A	T	H	L	M	N	I
O	P	A	Q	R	S	T	A	U	V	W	S
X	Y	Y	Z	A	B	C	N	D	E	F	A
G	H	G	I	J	K	L	T	M	N	O	N
P	Q	H	R	S	T	U	I	V	W	X	G
Y	Z	A	A	B	C	D	V	E	F	G	H
H	I	T	J	K	L	N	A	N	O	P	A
Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	N	X	Y	Z	T

PENPALS

Name: **Malini Nair**
Age : 14
Address: 47, Hemavathi, R.M.P Colony, Kuempu Nagar, Mysore - 570 023, Karnataka.
Hobbies: Reading books, writing poems and watching cartoons.

Name: **Anupama**
Age: 13
Address: 1228, 26th main, 9th block, Jayanagar, Bangalore - 560 069.
Hobbies - Watching T.V., reading books, listening to music and making friends.

Name: **Sampreet S. Hegde,**
Age: 13
Address: 3, Shakti Colony, Near Nrupatunga Hills, Hubli 580 032.
Hobbies: Reading, writing, playing chess, philately, collecting coins and watching T.V.

Name: **R. Sangeetha**
Age:15
Address: 9, Sreenivas Bldg, Shraddhanand Road, Matunga, Mumbai.
Hobbies: Singing, listening to music, dancing, cooking, reading, watching T.V., playing, making friends and diary writing.

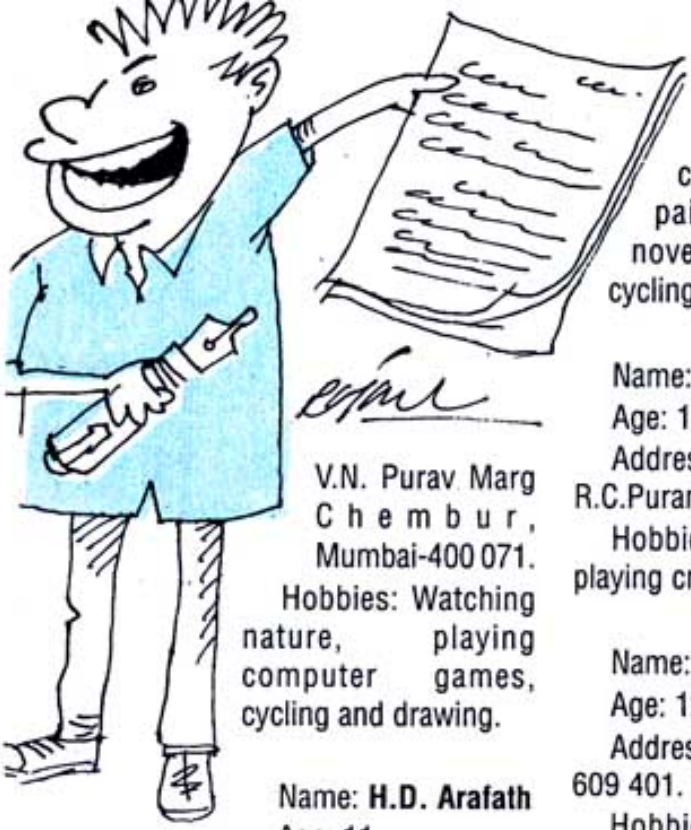
Name: **K. Harikrishna**
Age: 14
Address: 3838, IX A, Chola Jrs., Sainik School, Amaravathi Nagar, Udumalpet - 642 102.
Hobbies: Philately, watching T.V., swimming, horse riding, painting and canoeing.

Name: **C. Vasundhara**
Age : 13
Address: D-7, SBI Officers Quarters, 15, Race course road, Coimbatore - 641 018.
Hobbies: Listening to music (Carnatic/English Pop), watching TV, drawing, singing, reading books - comics, writing poems and stories, gardening & handwork.

Name: **G. Shanmugapriya**
Age : 12
Address: 7, Marthupandian nagar, 2nd street, Singarayar Colony, Madurai - 2.
Hobbies: Reading story books, coin collection, drawing, playing shot put and writing jokes.

Name: **S.B. Karthik**
Age: 15
Address: D19/2 D.R.D.O Township, C.V. Raman Nagar, Bangalore- 560 093.
Hobbies: Reading books, making friends, playing cricket, badminton and basket ball.

Name: **M.K. Saranya**
Age: 11
Address: 103, Star View apartments,



V.N. Purav Marg
Chembur,
Mumbai-400 071.

Hobbies: Watching nature, playing computer games, cycling and drawing.

Name: **H.D. Arafath**

Age: 11

Address: 6-A, Kola Street, Tirupati 517 501.

Hobbies: Reading Gokulam, drawing, playing chess, watching cartoons.

Name: **Deepika Joseph**

Age: 10

Address: No.11/2, 17th Cross, 2nd floor, Vasanthnagar, Bangalore - 560 052.

Hobbies: Dancing, telling jokes, reading, travelling, singing, studying and making new friends.

Name: **C. Keerthana**

Age: 14

Address: 43A,P.V.R. road, Mohanur Road, Namakkal 637 001.

Hobbies: Watching T.V, playing shuttle, playing computer games, drawing and painting, philately, reading novels, listening to music and cycling.

Name: **Mohammed Idrees**

Age: 15

Address: 303/A B.H.E.L Township, R.C.Puram, Hyderabad - 32.

Hobbies: Skating, reading books, playing cricket.

Name: **H. Mohamed Shameer**

Age: 12

Address: 178, Azad St, Elandangudi 609 401.

Hobbies: Collecting stamps and coins, writing tit bits and stories and playing shuttlecock.

Name: **M. Priya**

Age: 13

Address: 24, IV street, I Cross,

NGO Colony, Melagaram, Tenkasi, Tirunelveli (Dist), Tamilnadu 621 818.

Hobbies: Reading novels, drawing, painting, calligraphy and listening to music.

Name: **T. Feblin Dorothy**

Age:14

Address: Blessing Youth Mission, Church Colony, Vellore- 632 006.

Hobbies: Playing, listening to music, watching TV, writing poems, drawing and reading stories.

PUZZLE ANSWERS

I. CROSSWORD

1 B	L	2 U	E	3 W	H	A	L	4 E
A	■	T	■	E	■	■	■	N
5 N	E	T	■	N	■	6 E	V	E
G	■	7 E	N	T	E	R	■	R
8 A	I	R	■	■	■	9 R	U	G
L	■	■	■	■	■	O	■	Y
10 O	R	15 D	I	16 N	A	R	14 Y	■
R	■	O	■	I	■	■	11 A	N
12 E	G	G	■	13 L	O	C	K	■

II. WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN...

(i) A jeweller sells watches but a jailor watches cells.

(ii) A scientist makes the impossible possible but a politician makes the possible impossible.

(iii) In a test, if you know the answer then you will pass but in a quiz only if you don't know the answer you can pass.

III. WHO SAID IT?

1. William Wordsworth, 2. John Keats, 3. Voltaire, 4. William Shakespeare, 5. Abraham Lincoln, 6.Archimedes, 7. St. Matthew, 8.Socrates.

IV. BEWITCHED!

The final answer will always be the unlucky number - 13

V. MR. LAL MEETS MR.JEETU

Only Mr. Lal! Others were coming from the market side.

VI. MEMORIALS

A	B	V	E	E	H	B	H	O	U	M	T
C	D	I	E	F	G	H	S	I	J	K	Q
R	A	J	G	H	A	T	H	L	M	N	I
O	P	A	Q	R	S	T	A	U	V	W	S
X	Y	Y	Z	A	B	C	M	D	E	F	A
G	H	G	I	J	K	L	T	M	N	O	N
P	Q	H	R	S	T	U	I	V	W	X	G
Y	Z	A	A	B	C	D	Y	E	F	G	H
H	I	E	J	K	L	N	A	N	O	P	A
Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	N	X	Y	Z	T

WHO WAS THIS MAN?

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

- Abraham Lincoln must be a source of inspiration to all. When everything seems lost, remember that the future remains...

LEND ME YOUR EARS

Part II

Ashok Rajan, Junior College, SIES College, Mumbai

a) Explain the role of the mridangist.

b) According to you, what are the essential features necessary for a good carnatic concert?

c) What is the role of the thamboora?

a) Songs are always set to a rhythm. No song can be rendered without a rhythm. Tala is only the visual indicator of this rhythm.

The percussionist, in particular the mridangist has two functions.

1) to maintain the rhythm and count of the tala in which the vocalist is singing.

2) to play for the song and the style of the vocalist.

The mridangist waits for the vocalist to start, grasps the rhythm and count of the tala and then starts playing, while keeping an ear glued to what the vocalist is singing.

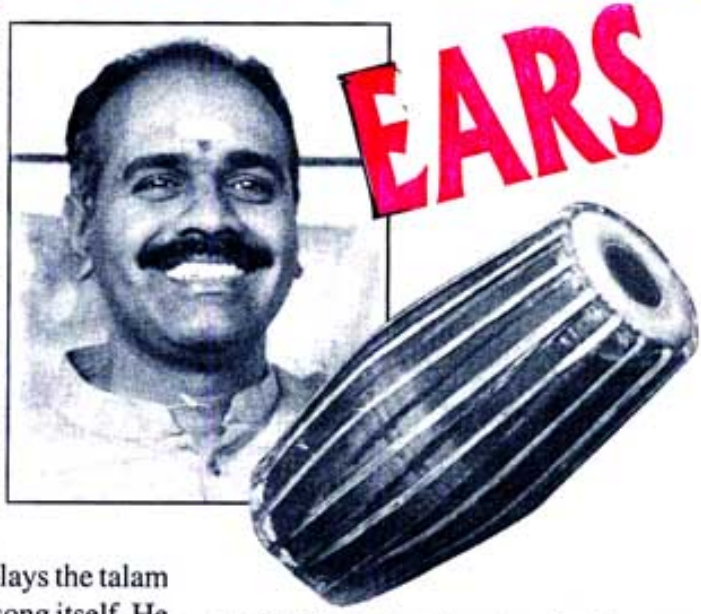
Thus, the mridangist plays the talam and sometimes plays the song itself. He sometimes pauses while at other times he fills the pauses. Finally he also gets to play alone. This is called the 'thani avarthanam.'

How well he is able to give a mix of all these, determines his level of proficiency.

During the thani avarthanam, if other percussionists are also present, (ghatam, kanjira) they too get a turn to play alone for a while. Then there is a synchronisation of all the percussion instruments.

b) A good carnatic music concert is one which has atleast five of these ten elements :-

1. Melody 2. Perfect rhythm 3. Clear diction 4. Proper usage of grammar in raga 5. Good mix of new and old songs 6. Variety in speed of the songs 7. A good musical understanding between the vocalist and his accompanists



N. VIJAY SIVA

8. Imaginative and neat rendition of raga alapana and niravals 9. Total self involvement while performing 10. Respect for the art and certainly for the audience.

c) The thamboora is the best of the Indian instruments. It is a four stringed instrument that is strummed vertically or horizontally. Why do we have this thamboora in a concert? There is no other instrument which can exhibit the shruthi (pitch) and the key note 'ga' together. Although this note is not played on the thamboora, you will still hear it in a well - tuned thamboora. This note keeps the singer constantly aligned with the pitch.

Although in recent times we have electronic gadgets that produce the sound of the thamboora, the traditional thamboora remains unparalleled.

The thamboora played in the background adds so much more to the melody of the music, doesn't it? Perhaps, that is why Sage Narada carries a thamboora wherever he goes!

* the best instrument

Krishna, Std. XI, PSSS School, Chennai

What is a raga? How can we identify different ragas?

A raga is a structure of seven swaras arranged in ascending and descending order.

Sa Ri Ga Ma Pa Da Ni (ascending)
Sa Ni Da Pa Ma Ga Ri (descending)

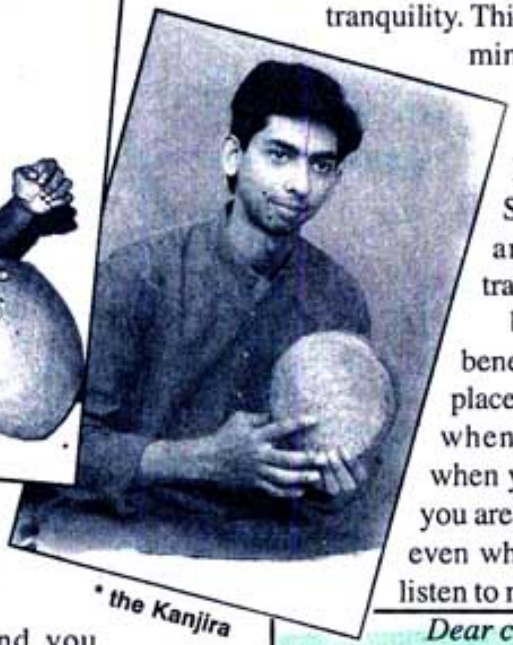
A raga need not have all the seven swaras but a minimum of five is required. Several ragas have been evolved by carefully using various permutations and combinations of these seven swaras.

* the Mridangam

Now for the identification. Let me assume that you know all the forty odd students in your

class. How can you identify them? Your eyes have now seen them so often and for so long. Your eyes then dictate to your mind to tell you who the person is and your voice calls out the name. What your eyes can do, your ears can also do. All you need to do is to listen to a lot of music in general and specific ragas in particular. Once you get acquainted with the raga, it is difficult to forget it.

* the Ghatam



* the Kanjira

Even the friend you meet today may change over a period of time but ragas won't. A raga, once your friend, is always your friend!

P. Sai Deepak, Std. IV, Saikor English Medium School, Vizianagaram

a) Are there ragas that help to improve memory power of students?

b) What is the suitable time to enjoy music to get benefits?

a) Music therapy first started in India about 300 years ago. A book 'Raga Chikitcha' was written. But it is not available now. Perhaps in it was mentioned the name of the raga that could increase memory power. We have no definite clue now.

Music however, it is proved, can clear the mind, put the unwanted to rest and thus create a space for sumptuous knowledge intake. It would be good to listen to that raga which gives you tranquility. This will lead to a better mind and hence better memory.

In that sense, Madyamavathi, Suruti or Saurashtram are some ragas for tranquility.

b) Anytime - Music is beneficial any time, any place - when you are busy, when you are relaxed, when you are happy, when you are ill and depressed, or even when you just want to listen to music!

Dear children,

We are sorry we did not give you the names of the geniuses whose photographs appeared under this column in the December 2001 issue of your favourite magazine. The names are (from top to bottom)

1. Ariyakudi Ramanuja Iyengar (vocal) 2. Palghat Mani Iyer (mridangam) 3. S. Balachander (veena) 4. Ravi kiran (chitra veena) and 5. U. Srinivas (mandolin).

NEXT INSIGHT - PUPPETRY

APPU & KUKU

FLYING LESSON

A HANG GLIDER!... AND NO ONE AROUND... AT LAST, THIS IS MY CHANCE TO LIFT OFF!

STORY AND PICTURES: J. DISNEY

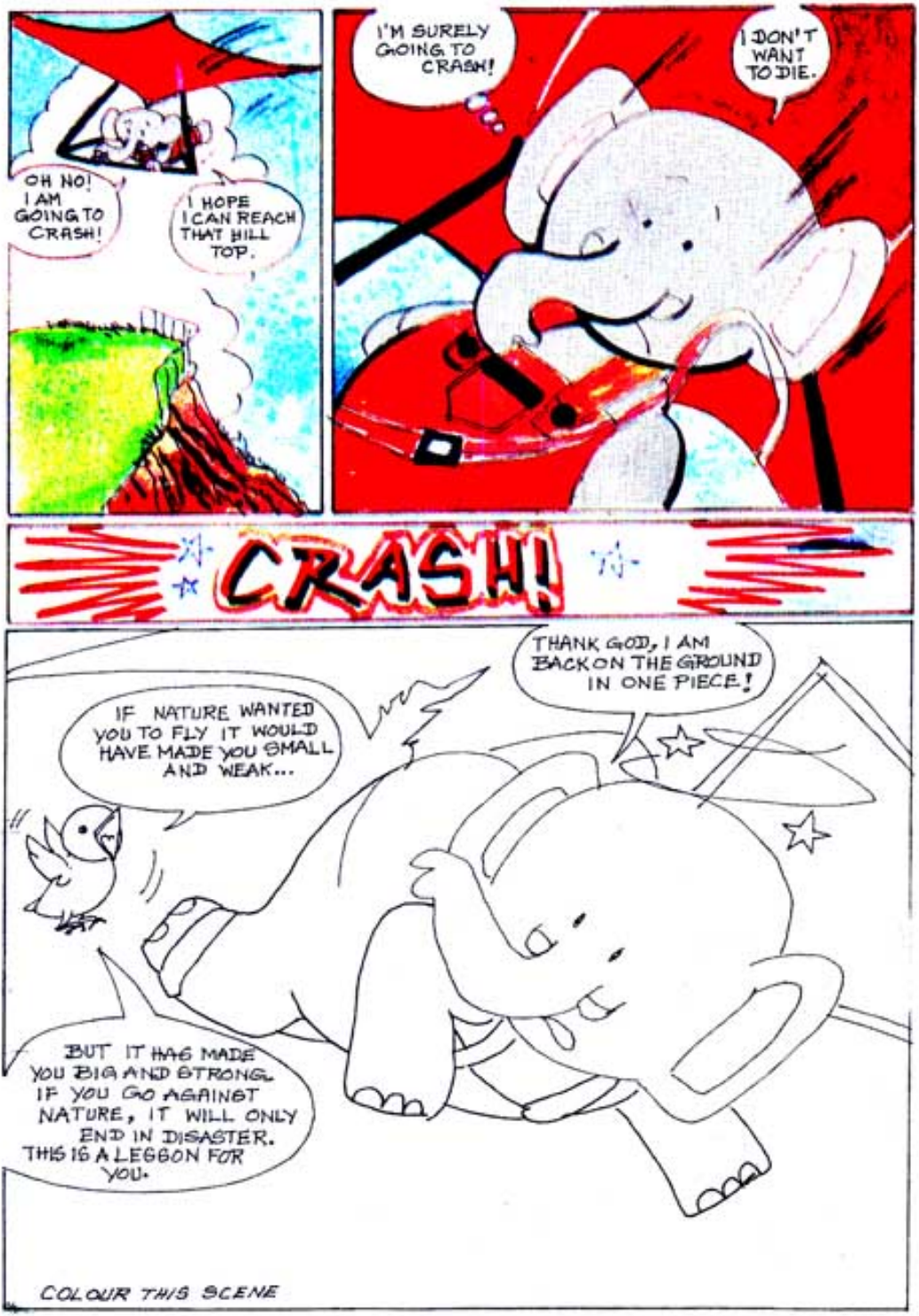
STRAPPING HIMSELF TO THE HANG GLIDER...

THIS IS FUN!

A SUDDEN GUST OF WIND ~

HIGHER THAN THE CLOUDS...

HOW DO I LAND THIS THING?!


OH NO! I AM GOING TO CRASH!
I HOPE I CAN REACH THAT HILL TOP.
I'M SURELY GOING TO CRASH!
I DON'T WANT TO DIE.
CRASH!
IF NATURE WANTED YOU TO FLY IT WOULD HAVE MADE YOU SMALL AND WEAK...
THANK GOD, I AM BACK ON THE GROUND IN ONE PIECE!
BUT IT HAS MADE YOU BIG AND STRONG. IF YOU GO AGAINST NATURE, IT WILL ONLY END IN DISASTER. THIS IS A LESSON FOR YOU.
COLOUR THIS SCENE

The Clever Little Fairy

It was a fine winter morning. A beautiful fairy and her young daughter were flying over fairy land. They came across a lovely garden. The young girl was at once attracted to it. She asked her mother if she could have a rose from the garden. The fairy wanted to fulfill her daughter's wish. Asking her daughter to wait outside, she entered the garden.

A few hours passed, but the fairy did not return. The girl became anxious and went in search of her mother. As she roamed the garden, she came across a Brownie with big ears. The Brownie was trimming the rose bushes and watering the plants. On enquiring, the girl found out that her mother had been cursed to take her place among the other flowers. This had happened because the Brownie was angry that she had plucked a flower without prior permission.

The little girl wept and begged that her mother be released of the curse. She explained to the Brownie that it was she who had driven her mother into the garden for the flower. She wanted to have her mother back and would do

anything for it.

The Brownie put the little girl to a test. He announced that she could have her mother back only if she spotted her among all the other flowers. The girl was given just one chance to do so. She was brave and declared to give it a try.

The little girl walked around the garden for a while. The Brownie followed her. She looked at all the flowers carefully and closely one by one. Atlast, she touched upon, very gently, one bright red rose that stood amidst several others, and hey presto, her mother, ever so beautiful, appeared right in front of them. She apologized for having plucked the flower without obtaining permission.

The Brownie was glad that the two of them were united once again. However, he was astonished, surprised and curious to know how the little girl had guessed right. Hence he asked her.

"Dear Brownie" the girl explained. "This is winter. There is sure to be some dew on the flowers in the morning, since they have been here all night. But the flower that I touched, was dry with not a single dew drop on it. It was obvious to me that it had bloomed just now..."

Before the little girl could complete her sentence, the fairy gave her a big hug and a gentle kiss. The Brownie presented her with the most beautiful rose in the garden. The fairy and her young daughter resumed their walk and lived happily ever after.

- B. Bharathi, Std IX,
DAV Bhel School, Ranipet.

EXPERIENCE

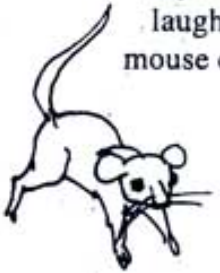
A WILD MOUSE CHASE

It was around noon one day, when my sister spotted a mouse in our bedroom. Frightened to her wits, she screamed and shrieked. Terrified by this scream I ran to the room and soon joined her in the search for the mouse. My parents were away and my poor grandmother who was sleeping on the cot in the same room, tried her best to calm us down. My uncle, who lives in the first floor also joined in this search.

We closed the bed room door, hoping that the search for the little creature would then be restricted to a smaller area - that of the bed room only. With brooms in our hands, we cautiously peered and peeped into every possible corner, underneath and behind furniture, behind curtains and even inside the dustbin. My grandmother too joined in as she stood on the cot and gave us instructions. But we were disappointed not to find the mouse. Not being successful, we gave up and came to the conclusion that my sister had imagined the whole thing.

We went into the hall and sank into the sofas. Suddenly, our little friend ran out of the bedroom and scurried across the hall. I ran after him broom in hand, but he ran out into the garden, through the open door, all by himself as if he knew what exactly to do!

Where he hid in the bedroom is still a mystery. Even to this day, we burst out laughing whenever, we recall this 'wild mouse chase.'



- R. Divya , Std VII,
St. Joseph H.S.,
Pune.

FOOLISH PLAY

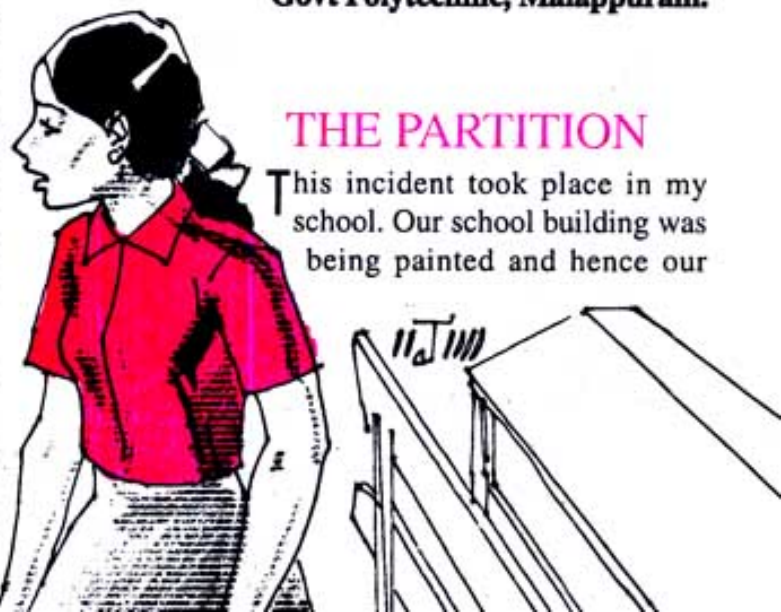
This incident occurred recently. I was at home, in my room, studying Physics. I felt dull that evening and was unable to concentrate on the equations and formulae. Out of sheer boredom, I began to fiddle with a match box that was on my table. I began to strike the matches one by one, testing to see for how long I could hold it in my hand. Then I would blow it and throw the stick on the ground.

The worst thing happened. One of the sticks nearly burnt my hand and I threw it away in a frenzy not realising at that second that it was still burning. To my horror, the stick fell on my bed and the bedsheet caught fire!

Ofcourse, I screamed for help and my parents came rushing in. The fire was put out after a struggle and luckily no more damage was caused.

Although everything was fine in a while, I realised how foolish I had been. I fully deserved the scoldings I received from my parents and felt extremely ashamed of myself.

- Sreelaj Nair, Age 15,
Govt Polytechnic, Malappuram.



THE PARTITION

This incident took place in my school. Our school building was being painted and hence our

class was temporarily shifted.

We had only a wooden grill as a partition between X (A) and X(B) class rooms. While I was in X(A), my best friend was in X(B). We could get a clear picture of the other class by peeping through the holes in the partition.

It was our Biology period, and our class monitor informed us that our teacher was busy at a meeting and would hence be late to class. There was a loud cheer from all of us since we were going to have a free period. Within a few seconds, we heard the children of X(B) also scream. It was obvious that they too were having a free period!

Mischief was soon at its best. There was singing, dancing, drumming on the table and also some games. I walked to the end of the class, peeped through the grill hoping to see my friend. I shouted for her and luckily (or unluckily as it later turned out to be) she heard me. Soon, we were engaged in a conversation, blissfully ignorant of what was happening around us.

It was only when the students greeted the Biology teacher that I knew he had come. Feeling terribly embarrased, I ran across the room, climbing over the benches and stamping many a feet before I finally reached my place which was in front and right under my teacher's nose!

My teacher gave me a cold stare while I sat trembling in fear, waiting to receive a blow from him. As soon as he saw me well settled, he just said "Was the movie that you were watching not good? Why did you come away?"

Although he sounded very sarcastic, he could not help laughing when all the children in the class roared with laughter. I too joined in!

- Disha Suvarna, Age 15,
Jaycees English Med. School,
Karkala.

JUST TO REMIND YOU...

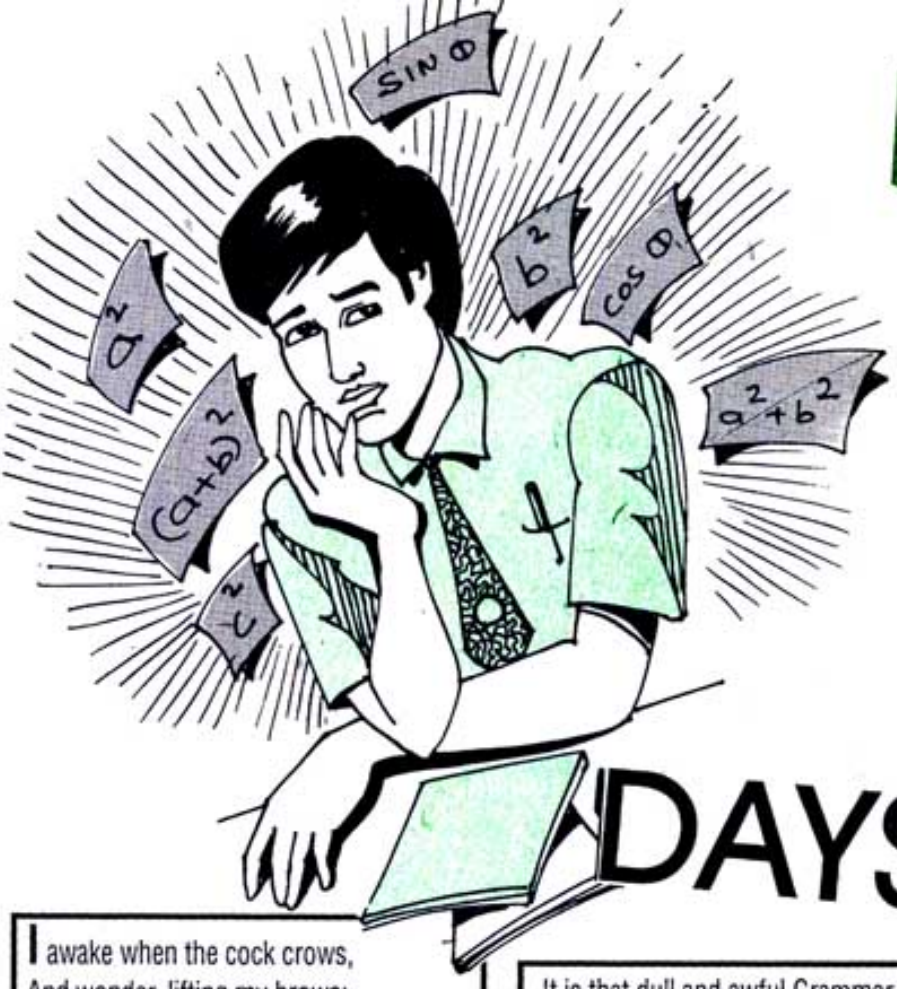
Dear children,

You must give details of your ***NAME, CLASS, NAME OF SCHOOL, ADDRESS OF SCHOOL and RESIDENTIAL ADDRESS*** *when you send in your articles either by e-mail or by post.*

We also require a ***declaration*** *from you that the article sent is your original creation. If not, do mention the source.*

Any contribution without these details will not be considered for publication.

- Editor.



DULL DAYS?

I awake when the cock crows,
And wonder, lifting my brows;
Whether to brush or not.
But my teeth plead 'forget me not'.
I manage to leave for school,
After bathing in the pool.
I rush through the traffic jam,
Having skipped my bread and jam.
Finally I come to school on time,
Only to hear the bell chime.

My nerves weaken when Algebra
Springs up before me like a cobra.
My brain aches when its Chemistry,
In which the equations are a mystery!
Suddenly Mr. Physics does appear,
Oh! How I wish I could disappear!

It is that dull and awful Grammar
That makes me sigh and murmur.
I gain my energy back in a bunch,
When I set out to eat my lunch.

My energy drains once its Biology
Be it either Botany or Zoology.
Then comes the long, boring History,
Which speaks of someone or other's victory.
It muddles my head with many a name
But ofcourse, there's no one to blame.
Its Geography that wears me out,
In despair my lips do pout!
Back to life I suddenly spring,
At last, I can hear the bell ring!

- M. Clint Solomon, Std. VIII,
Rose Mary, Palayamkottai.

A 'HEART TO HEART' CONVERSATION

Doctor : Hello, Gokul! I haven't seen you for long. What brings you here man?

Gokul : Good morning doctor. I've been having a funny feeling for the past few days.

Doctor : What is it? Tell me...

Gokul : Whenever I see a rat or a mouse, I feel like chasing it around. If I see a bowl of milk...

Doctor : You feel like drinking it. But that's alright... anybody can drink milk...

Gokul : That's not all, doc. When I see a cat on the road, I begin to follow it.

Doctor : That's funny.

Consolation Prize II

Humour Contest

Come on. Let me examine you...

(Doctor examines Gokul with his stethoscope)

Doctor : I am so sorry Gokul... but:.. but... you seem to have lost your heart...

Gokul : What do you mean doctor? Why do you say that?

Doctor : Because all I can hear is the 'meow'ing of a cat. Your heart is stolen... probably... but tell me, were you in hospital recently?

Gokul : But ofcourse. Just for a few days. But why?

Doctor : Never mind 'why'. Tell me, did you have a surgery?

Gokul : How did you guess right? I was admitted because I had an attack of appendicitis. However I can't see any connection between...

Doctor : Wait, wait, just a minute... you know, kidney robberies have now become very common. But, when you were in hospital, they must have stolen your heart mistaking it for your kidney...

Gokul : What! What next?

Doctor : ... and they have replaced it with the heart of a cat's, once they realised their mistake! But I can help you. Don't you worry.

Gokul : Thank goodness for that! The police can never help anyway because only doctors know the difference between a kidney and a heart.

Doctor : No, no. Listen to me. I have an idea. A great one. Here, take my stethoscope and examine the heart beat of every cat you see. Every cat's heart beat will sound 'meow'. But the one with your heart should sound 'tup-tup-tup.'

Gokul : That's not a bad idea! But I do not know how the human heart beat sounds! Let me listen to yours.

(It is now Gokul's turn to examine the doctor)

Gokul *(frightened and startled)* **:** I can't believe this! Amazing! It just cannot be true.

(Gokul nearly faints)

Doctor : What is it? What happened? Come on tell me... quick.

Gokul *(speaks slowly with fear)*: Do you know that your heart beat sounds... BOW - WOW ...?

Doctor : What! Give me that stethoscope. *(the doctor examines him self and suddenly begins to bark)*

BOW WOW! BOW WOW!

Gokul : Meow! Meow!

The doctor begins to chase Gokul. They run around for a while and vanish to go in search of their respective hearts.

- S. Jagadish, Std. XI, Shri Anand Jain Vidyalaya, Chennai.

GRANDMA WORM

Dear Grandma,

I am studying in VIII standard, but my weight is just thirty kilos. I eat regularly but my weight does not improve. Please help.

- S. Satheesh, Chennai

Shraddha Chorgi, Pune

Sampreet Hegde, Hubli

Dear Satheesh, Shraddha and Sam preet,

All of you have the same problem - being thin and short. Sampreet also says that he is being teased by friends because of this.

If you are otherwise normal, the only way to improve height and weight is a good balanced diet coupled with sufficient exercise. Take a brisk walk daily. You will start sweating after 20 minutes. Continue for another five minutes, and gradually increase to a maximum of 40 minutes. This will improve your appetite and food intake. But what you eat is also important. Your diet should be protein rich, but it should not neglect carbohydrates, vitamins or minerals. Yogasanas will also help but should be done under expert supervision. If you practise yogasana in the mornings, you can play or do other exercises in the evening but not together at the same time. After three months if you don't find any improvement, you will have to consult a good doctor to rule out any disease which restricts growth.

xxx

I am very angry with my mother. She doesn't give me any pocket money. I asked my father. He is also not giving me pocket money. Why are they treating me like this?

- M. Vignesh, Hyderabad

Dear Vignesh,

You will have to explain to your parents why you require pocket money. When I was very young, my father used to give me two rupees a month as pocket money. That was a substantial amount

PROBLEMS OF POCKET

those days! But I had to keep an account of every expense I incurred, down to the last paisa! It is also true that today,

I am very angry...

there are many pitfalls for youngsters, from which they can never recover if they once fall into one of them and your parents may be afraid of this. So, instead of being angry with your mother,

it is better to talk to her leisurely and find out what she has in mind regarding pocket money. It may be that your parents are facing real financial problems, in which case you must sympathise and cooperate with them.

x x x

I am a student of class X. I am very much interested in chess and I want to participate in tournaments. But I don't know what to do. Please help!

- K. Chandrasekhar, Visakhapatnam.

Dear Chandrasekhar,

There must be a chess association in Visakhapatnam. Go through the telephone directory to find if there is an entry. Then you can approach them for guidance. If you don't find an entry in the

directory, approach a sports shop owner. He may be able to help you to locate a top ranking chess player in your city. You can also consult your school sports master. Best of luck!

x x x

I find history and maths, difficult. I do take extra lessons but it doesn't help.

- Mayura S. Dhapara, Mumbai

Dear Mayura,

There are two ways to study any subject. 1. To score decent marks in exams. 2. Getting involved in the subject and start loving it. If your aim is the former, the easiest way is to gather the question papers of the past seven or eight years, look for the correct answers and write them down repeatedly until you have mastered them. You are sure to get through the exams. The second choice is more difficult. You will have to develop a taste for the subject. If it is history, read a few historical romances and try to separate fact from fiction. Then read the corresponding period in history books. Now you will find history more interesting. Get involved. Discuss within yourself the events. Ask yourself why, who, what and when. Find out the answers. Soon you will love the subject. Similarly in maths you will have to understand the logic behind each step leading to the final answer. Once you achieve this, maths will become a joy instead of bringing misery!

Love,
Grandma worm

(Grandma worm will not reply to questions which do not carry full school and residential addresses.)

Dear Reader...

Dignity in Sports

The Indian cricket team has returned from their South African tour and the matches with England are in progress here. But the bitterness created in South Africa will linger for a long time, even after the defeats of the South African tour are forgotten. We lost both the test series and the one dayer series. But that does not matter much, compared to the accusation against our players of ball tampering and misbehaving in the field.

Losing a match series can be accepted as part of the game but the latter is a shame which cannot be brushed aside easily. The match referee came in for a lot of criticism as having been very harsh, which is not without basis. He could have first issued a warning instead of straight away naming the players and punishing them. Our players would have surely responded properly and in a dignified manner, when warned.

No one would believe that Sachin, a gentleman to the core, would have tampered with the ball. It was quite evident on the T.V. screen that he was only removing the dirt on the ball with his finger nails. Even so, he should have consulted the umpire before doing so. He either forgot or ignored the rules of the game. Similarly, Virender Sehwag shouting at the umpire to the point of intimidation was wrong. Though our Cricket Control Board tried to defend him they had to yield finally and Sehwag was out of the game against England.

Let us all remember that any game - not only cricket - is played for uplifting us both physically and mentally. Dignity in sports is more important than the exercise it provides. The urge to win is essential, but it should not lead to bad behaviour.

A student can score low marks in an examination for various reasons, which is understandable; but copying to score high marks is unforgiveable. Don't you agree?

- Editor

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LAUGH AWAY!

GHOST TALK

Mr. Sharma : *Are there any ghosts in this village?*

Mr. Nobody : *How am I to know? I died ten years ago!*

- Chris Fernando, Virar (W)

A DIALOGUE

"Do not go out in the hot sun."

"Why not?"

"Because you will become black!"

- C. Selvaraj, Std.VI, Holycross MHSS, Salem.

SALES TALK

Salesman : *Madam, this coil is colourless, odourless...*

Madam : *But you forgot one thing.*

Salesman : *What is it madam?*

Madam : *Effectless!*

- Sandesh C.V., Std. VII, Mysore.

QUICK DELIVERY

Ramesh : *Why are you running so fast?*

Gopal : *I have to deliver this letter immediately.*

Ramesh : *But, where?*

Gopal : *I have no time to read the address!*

- R. Lakshmi, Std. IX, National HS, Calcutta

WHICH HALF WHEN

Teacher : *We will have only half-a-day of school this morning...*

Students : *Yeah! Hurrah!*

Teacher : *... We'll have the other half this afternoon!*

- Ajit Nathanael, Std. IX, Stanes HS School, Coonoor.

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